March 23, 1898. – 3 M. – ? De La Mare,

Literature Department of the Woman's
Board of Home Missions of the
Presbyterian Church.

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"Inasmuch"

By

Jeanette W. Judd

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156 Fifth Avenue, New York City

"INASMUCH."

BY JEANETTE W. JUDD.

"Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of these, ye did it not to me."

IF there was one thing Elizabeth Day prided herself upon, it was her thoroughness, that she was not a "dilettante" in anything ; and certainly a girl who read Kant in the original and quoted Dante in the "soft Tuscan tongue" could not be called superficial.

To-day she had been hard at work since early morning finishing up a water-color sketch. It was coming out beautifully and she sighed a little impatiently when her maid announced one of her friends. However, she turned the easel to the wall, drew two easy chairs in front of the grate and welcomed her guest cordially.

"Evidently Kate has something on her mind." she thought, as Miss Forbes seated herself with a preoccupied air and drew a letter from her pocket.

"'Lizbeth," she began abruptly, "do you remember Mary Hadleigh ?"

"Remember her ? I don't think any of our class will ever forget her, for she took first honors all around and didn't leave a ghost of a chance for the rest of us. Besides," she added warmly, "she was the sweetest little saint that ever breathed. What about her?"

"Well, listen. You know brother Jack has a sheep ranch out in Colorado, and he's always roaming over those Western wilds prospecting for mines and things. He'll date a letter in Idaho, finish it up in Texas, and between times send a telegram from San Francisco or Yankton. To-day this letter came from Choctaw Gulch, if you know where that is."

"I certainly do not. What has it to do with Mary? She is not out there, is she?"

Miss Forbes did not answer at once. She unfolded the letter deliberately, than said with an odd inflection in her voice.

"Before I begin, 'Lizbeth, I wish you would look around this room. Look slowly—take it all in—then I'll read Jack's letter."

It was very queer, so unlike Kate's usual racy nonsense. What did she mean? Elizabeth looked curiously about her room to see if she could find an answer. The afternoon sun shone in through the south windows; its rays were flashed back from the silver fittings of the dressing table; they lit the face of her favorite Madonna with a new glory and lingered caressingly on the bowl of roses and mignonette whose fragrance filled the air. It was a beautiful room and expressed well, she often thought complacently, her own personality.

"Well," she said, as she completed the survey, "what next?"

"This is next," said Miss Forbes quietly, and read from her letter;

"I met one of your school friends the other day under rather unusual circumstances. I was riding slowly over a bad bit of prairie, and as I came up alongside a dugout, I saw a woman on the lee side, with a tub of clothes. It was blowing fifty miles an hour, and she was trying to rig up a clothes line. Just as she got one end tied fast and started for a pole with the other, the norther whisked round the other, lifted that tub like a thistle down, and in two seconds there wasn't a rag in sight. I roared; it was the neatest thing I ever saw. But when the little woman turned round and started back for the house, head down, fighting the wind and fighting the tears back, too—I didn't laugh any more. The next thing I knew Bill and I were loping over the prairie after that washing. We brought back all that were left in the county—"

Both girls broke out into an irrresistible laugh.

"Just imagine Jack careering over the plain with his arms full of wet linen!" said Kate.

"It must have been more exciting than polo," said Elizabeth dryly.

Kate read on: "Perhaps you can take in my astonishment when I found my Madonna of the Tub was your friend, Miss Hadleigh (Mrs. Grant). In ten minutes we were chatting away like old cronies, with the small fry hovering around. My arm aches like the tooth-ache, writing, but I'm bound to persevere—('He's never written such a letter before in his life,' interjected Kate). It's time you kid-gloved saints and sisters in the *effete* East knew how some of your substitutes live out here. You know what these dugouts are like. I could stand up straight in this one and an inch to spare ('Jack's six feet one'). There was a lean-to curtained off where I suppose the dominie and his wife slept. The walls were lined with building paper; the cooking stove was on one side of the room, the table on the other; there were two chairs, the baby's cradle and a washbench. That was all, and about all there was room for. They are living here, two miles from anything, because since the railroad struck the Gulch, nobody but a saloon keeper can pay the rents.

"Grant came home soon with a couple of bundles and I heard one youngster sing out, 'Oh, mamma, papa's got some meat!' and the other piped up, 'And ginger snaps!!' They were hushed up quickly, but I drew my own inferences. In the course of the evening I found out that their salary was overdue, they were in debt and Grant had just two dollars and thirteen cents to lay in winter supplies with.

"We men peeled potatoes for supper and talked political economy and evolution. Grant's a Yale man, same fraternity as I, and as level-headed a fellow as I've met. The menu for supper was bread and potatoes, with fried mush and coffee for dessert. No butter and no milk. They're raising the infant on condensed milk, so the rest of the family can't indulge.

"I was making my adieux about nine o'clock, when some men stopped at the house and wanted to know the way to the Gulch. Grant asked them in and I offered to pilot them, but Grant got in a prayer meeting first. He did it so easily that we all dropped on it as if we went to them every night in the week (I havn't been in one for ten years). We sang some hymns; Grant read some verses that screwed into a fellow's conscience—and then he prayed. I tell you Kate, I never meant to be a 'professor'—but if I could get hold of the sort of religion that man has, I'd go for it. He has a grip on the Almighty that means something. I haven't any use for the gilt-edged religion that prays in plush pews and don't pay its missionaries (I don't mean you and mother, Katchen), but to know God—to believe—"

But Kate sprang up with a choking sob, "I can't read any more 'Lizbeth. To think of Jack, dear, darling Jack, wanting to be a Christian, and mamma and I have been praying for that so long—and the first one to make him think is a home missionary—and in debt—and this suit cost me a hundred dollars for making—"

The tears were coming too fast to be held back, and more afraid of Elizabeth's cool sarcasm than of anything else in the world, Kate did not try to finish her sentence, but ran down stairs and disappeared as suddenly as she came.

Elizabeth could not go on with her painting that afternoon. The light was still perfect; Kate's call had not been a long one; but after trying a few half-hearted touches, she put her colors away, and dressed for a walk. As she passed through the hall her mother called to her:

"Elizabeth, are you going shopping

"I think not this afternoon, mother," she answered, hardly knowing why she felt so unlike anything of the sort.

She walked slowly down town in the brilliant sunlight, fighting a battle with her conscience and strangely at variance with her own self and the beauty of the day.

"Why do they send such people out to those Western savages?" she argued indignantly. "I believe in adaption of means to ends. Who would think of using a delicate watch spring to move a trip hammer (with an approving mental pat at the metaphor), and cultivated people have no right to bury themselves in that way. It's sheer waste."

"But," answered conscience, "a watch spring could carry the electric current which would move a thousand trip hammers, and God did not think it a waste to give His only Son to save sinners. Besides, men like Jack Forbes are not savages."

Elizabeth winced. She knew why Jack had chosen to "bury" himself out in the indefinite limitless "West." It was a sore point and she shifted her argument.

"Well, if they do send men and women out there to preach, they have no right to let them freeze and starve. Why don't they pay up their salaries promptly, like any respectable business firm? I don't see why everything in Church work should be done in such a shiftless, haphazard way."

"Who make up the church?" answered conscience sternly, "Men and women, like yourself, and upon each individual member lies the burden of the responsibility. Inasmuch as each one of you has not done his or her duty in this matter, 'ye have not done it unto me,' and the sin lies at your door. 'You cannot shift the blame upon a "Board" and say "I am innocent; see ye to it."' What have *you* done Elizabeth Day?"

And then, as suddenly as the light flashed upon Saul of Tarsus, God sent an arrow of conviction into her soul. The Sunday before had been the one after Thanksgiving, and for years this day had been chosen, above all others, for the annual Home Mission collection. Usually, she put ten dollars on the plate—she prided herself upon her liberality—but she had forgotten it this time, and one solitary dollar bill lay in her purse, with a check her father had given her the night before.

The pastor had made an especial appeal for the debt of the Board. Very tenderly and solemnly he had pressed home God's claim upon the silver and gold of His people, and still more earnestly the honor of being "workers together with Him," and the sacred joy of giving because he gave Himself for us.

Heart and conscience had pleaded together for the check that lay snugly in the dainty purse, but she had resisted. She had excellent excuses, "Perhaps father would not like it," and, with the pride which apes humility, "It would look like affectation for me to give a hundred dollars," and finally—stiffening her resolution as the plate passed by, enriched with the one dollar bill—"It would be giving from mere impulse, just because I am affected by the sermon."

It all came back to her now, argument, appeal, resistance, with a burning sense of guilt and shame. She walked home, fighting no longer, but crying out for forgiveness and light. "I have been called a Christian nine years," she thought bitterly, "and I never brought one soul to Jesus, and I never denied myself one single thing to help anyone else to do it."

From that time a new life began for Elizabeth Day. It was characteristic of her that she was not content with merely giving more money. She gave herself "soul and body, a living sacrifice," and giving "until she felt it" was only one phase of the rich and manifold development of the spiritual life springing from the full consecration. Life was radiant with new meaning when painting, study, social duties were all done, "as unto the Lord."

And if, as the years ran on, and she became a leader and worker in every good cause, some of the old interests were crowded out, there could be no regret, for the lesser joys were merged in the infinitely greater—even the "joy of the Lord."

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What command does God give about the p

Thou shalt open thy hand wide u thy brother, to thy poor, and to t needy in thy land.—*Deut.* xv : 11.

How should we treat those who ask for favors?

Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee, turn not thou away.—*Matt.* v : 42

What about the first fruits?

The first of the first fruits of thy land thou shalt bring into the house of the Lord thy God.—*Ex.* xxiii : 19.

Give another promise about liberal souls?

The liberal soul shall be made fat ; and he that watereth shall be watered also himself.—*Prov.* xi : 25.

What is God's greatest gift to man?

God so loved the world that he gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.—*John* iii : 16.

What should we say for this?

Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift.—2 *Cor.* ix : 15.

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LITERATURE DEPARTMENT
OF THE
Board of Home Missions and the Woman's Executive Committee of the Presbyterian Church,
156 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK CITY.

Bible Rules for Giving.

BY MRS. W. E. KNOX.

What did the Lord Jesus say about giving?

It is more blessed to give than to receive.—*Acts* xx: 35.

What kind of a giver does God love?

God loveth a cheerful giver.—2 *Cor.* ix: 7.

How have we received, and how should we give?

Freely ye have received, freely give.—*Matt.* x: 8.

How much should we give?

Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the Lord thy God, which He hath given thee.—*Deut.* xvi: 17.

(Also) Thou shalt give unto the Lord thy God according as the Lord thy God hath blessed thee.—*Deut.* xvi: 10.

What is the least that we should give?

Of all that thou shalt give me, I will surely give the *tenth* unto Thee.—*Gen.* xxviii: 22.

How are our gifts accepted?

If there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not.—2 *Cor.* viii: 12.

How should we honor the Lord?

Honor the Lord with thy substance, and with the first fruits of all thine increase.—*Prov.* iii: 9.

What promise does God make to such?

So shall thy barns be filled with plenty and thy presses shall burst out with new wine.—*Prov.* iii: 10.

What is said of him that pities the poor?

He that hath pity upon the poor *lendeth* unto the Lord, and that which he hath given will He pay him again. —*Prov.* xix: 17.

How shall we give?

Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity, for God loveth a cheerful giver.—2 *Cor.* ix: 7.

From whom does God accept offerings?

Of every man that giveth it willingly, with his heart, ye shall take my offering.—*Ex.* xxv : 2.

How often should we give?

Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him.—1 *Cor.* xvi: 2.

What promise is given to those who consider the poor?

Blessed is he that considereth the poor; the Lord will deliver *him* in time of trouble.—*Psalm* xli : 1.

What measures shall be given to those who give liberally?

Give and it shall be given unto you ; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal, it shall be measured to you again.—*Luke* vi : 38.

What does Isaiah say of liberal people?

The liberal deviseth liberal things ; and by liberal things shall he stand. —*Isaiah* xxxii : 8.

The Mountain People of the South.

UNTIL they were portrayed by the writers of stories, little or nothing was known of the people inhabiting the Mountains of the South. The section thus overlooked is the southwestern part of the Appalachian Mountain System. It extends from Virginia to Alabama, is about five hundred miles in length, and two hundred and fifty miles in width; includes one hundred and ninety-four counties; and has a population, according to the last census, of 2,657,497. Within this district are found two classes of people, and there is lacking that public spirit and common interest which weld together other communities of our country. One class is the cultivated and intelligent people living on the fertile farms and in villages in the valleys, and the other numbering between one and two millions dwelling in the mountain districts. Superficial observers get entirely opposite views of the characteristics, and the needs of the people of this section. If one travels in the valleys only, he sees that, simply by the exercise of more thrift and energy, the institutions of church and school could soon be made equal to any in our land; and, providing his route has kept him only in the mountain districts, he is overwhelmed to find his own race and nation so sorely in need of educational advantages, so poorly housed, so bound by poverty, so regardless or so hopeless concerning the future welfare of their children. Did the observer spend more time and study the facts more impartially he would see that his genial host lacked most sadly the qualification of that "liberal mind which deviseth liberal things;" and he would find himself unable to unravel the mystery as to whether matters of public industry are thus left to drift because of a lack of energy, because of poverty, or because of a feeling of dislike for the lower classes by those of superior rank and education. On the other hand, if he spent a few hours in any mountain settlement, he would find staunch and worthy men and women whose lives are circumscribed by ignorance and poverty, but who are longing for better things for themselves and for their children. The families of such as these are the strongest reserve forces of the church and the nation to-day. To bring out this reserve force needs more power and purse than can be furnished alone by the genial, intelligent, kind-hearted dwellers in the valleys, who are ever ready to co-operate with and use their influence to help forward genuine, honest, disinterested work for the benefit of the Mountain People. It is well to understand the ground of contradictory statements made by superficial observers because they are the persons who have most time and most inclination to express themselves in print. The one endeavors to persuade the northern churches that there is no need for Mission Work in the South among the white people; the other so degrades and brands the whole section that all Mission Work is brought into disrepute by their unjust and indiscriminating remarks, and we feel like exclaiming with the people of Drumtochty, "What right has any human being to fling about superlative adjectives, seeing what a big place the world is and how little we know."

All who know them recognize that the Mountain People are of Scotch-Irish descent.

I began to investigate as to the truth or falsity of this belief. I sought for some histories that would treat of the subject in the libraries of Pittsburgh and Allegheny. I could find none. I applied, through a friend, to the Congressional Library at Washington, D. C., I was informed there was no work in which their origin was treated of in that library, and the learned librarian expressed the opinion that there was no book which contained any account of their origin I then engaged in an extensive correspondence with persons who had mingled with these people, had intercourse with them, had seen their physical, mental and moral characteristics, and had heard them tell of their own origin and traditions, and thus been able to form some reliable judgment in regard to the matter. The replies given to my letters furnish testimonies and proofs which establish it beyond all reasonable doubt that the inhabitants of this mountain region are very largely of Scotch-Irish descent.

Some of my correspondents were Rev. C. A. Duncan, D. D., and Judge John P. Smith, Jonesboro, Tenn.; Rev. A. M. Penland, Beech, N. C.; Rev. Jno. M. Davies, D. D., now of Noblesville, Ind.; Rev. John E. Alexander, Greenville, Tenn.; Miss Clare de Graffenried, a writer for the Century Magazine; Miss Florence Stephenson, Principal of the Home Industrial School, Asheville, N. C.; Rev. J. C. Kelly, M.D., D.D., Nashville, Tenn., a distinguished minister of the Methodist Episcopal Church South, whose addresses on General Andrew Jackson, and General Sam. Houston and the Scotch-Irish in Tennessee, at successive meetings of the Scotch-Irish Society evidence his extensive knowledge of the subject. He writes thus:

"My studies in the history of the Scotch-Irish do not lead me to think that the mountaineers, to whom you refer, differ in origin from the other inhabitants of the States to which they belong. Their distinctive traits, do not, I think, come from origin, but from environment."

Kemp P. Battle, LL.D., the distinguished Professor of History in the University of North Carolina, writes thus: "The Mountaineers of Virginia, North Carolina and Kentucky are of the same stock as the rest of the people of those States, principally from England, North Ireland and South Scotland. Some Germans are among them, but not many. Their peculiarities come from their isolation and remoteness from churches, towns and schools."

J. R. Gilmore, Esq., the author of several books in relation to this mountainous region, says he spent several years traveling over it obtaining knowledge of the matters concerning which he was writing; investigating the history of the Southwest, and tracing the footsteps of John Sevier over the mountains. This brought him into frequent intercourse with these people, and made him acquainted with their characteristics and traditions. He writes of them thus: "The Mountain White population of the Southern Alleghanies occupy what is the very heart of this country, and number about two millions, all of them native born, with an inherited love of freedom, and the intense patriotism which is peculiar to our American character. These people, with scarcely an exception, are of the same blood as ourselves, of English, Scotch-Irish and Pennsylvania Dutch descent. The first settlers of the region, as far back as 1750, were intelligent, God-fearing men, who, with dauntless courage and determined will, had overcome the savages and the wilderness. Many of them bear the names and are the direct descendants of heroes who fought under John Sevier at King's Mountain, and smote with Jackson the veterans of Wellington at New Orleans. But ignorant though they generally are, there is not, in the whole country, a more honest, brave and liberty-loving class of men than these 'Mountain Whites,' and during our recent Civil War they developed qualities that do honor to our American manhood."

Bancroft says: "On January 20, 1775, a council met near Abingdon, Va., which was mostly composed of Presbyterians of Scotch-Irish descent. The spirit of freedom swept through their minds as naturally as the wind sighs through the fir trees of the Black Mountains. There they resolved never to surrender, but to live and die for liberty." Another council was held in Mecklenburg, N. C., May 31, 1775, which was composed largely of Scotch and Scotch-Irish people. They adopted some declarations and resolutions which were framed by twenty-seven Scotch-Irish Presbyterians, one-third of whom were Ruling Elders. Bancroft says: "These declarations were in effect a declaration of independence, as well as a complete system of government." In part they said: "We do hereby dissolve the political bands which have connected us with the mother country, and do absolve ourselves from all allegiance to the British Crown. We declare ourselves a free and independent people." This was more than a year before the Declaration of Independence was signed by the Continental Congress in Philadelphia, July 4, 1776.

Rev. C. A. Duncan, speaking of the mountaineers as the descendants of the patriot soldiers of the Revolutionary War, says: "It would naturally follow that the descendants of such men would be loyal to the Government. In the Civil War of 1860–65 they gave abundant proof of this fact by the sufferings of the people of this region for the cause of the Union, and by the number of soldiers they furnished to the Union army. Notwithstanding they had to leave their homes by night and travel across mountains and swollen streams two hundred miles, to reach the Union army, the First and

Second Congressional districts of Tennessee furnished more soldiers to the Federal army, according to their population, than any other two Congressional districts in the United States."

But there are some who still refuse to accept this testimony and these proofs, and present two objections as the reason for their disbelief. The first objection is that the Scotch-Irish are always and everywhere thrifty, while the mountaineers are thriftless. This objection is answered by several correspondents incidently. Rev. Dr. Kelley says: "The regions in which they live are unproductive, and three generations on such soil will bring degeneration to any race. When you add to this the fact that the earlier settlers found a hunting life more productive than tilling the soil you have the two influences which have doomed the people. Hunting begat idleness; poverty of soil brings no incentive to work." Another correspondent says on this point: "A Scotchman even will not work when there is no incentive." The second objection for not accepting the statement that these people are of Scotch-Irish descent is that they are not Presbyterian in their Church connection. This is easily explained. The Presbyterians a hundred years ago, did not supply them with gospel ordinances; and the successive generations accepted the Church connection of those who ministered to them. There are strong evidences that many of the ancestors of these mountaineers were Presbyterians.

A seemingly trivial proof adds force to this point. In several mountain districts I have heard yeast bread called "Presbyterian bread," and learned that it was so named from the fact that the early Presbyterian settlers were such strict Sabbath observers that they would not bake biscuit or corn bread on the Sabbath day although no mountaineer relishes cold bread. Different correspondents have written that they have been told by mountaineers that their ancestors were Presbyterians. One correspondent states that in a very limited acquaintance with Methodist ministers among them, two of them stated that their ancestors were Presbyterians.

The great grandfather of one of these Methodist ministers was a Presbyterian minister who came from Scotland with his entire congregation and settled at a place which they named Scotland Neck, in Halifax County, North Carolina.

Another correspondent writes that he knows three Methodist preachers among the mountains who say their ancestors were Presbyterians. The surnames are with four exceptions Scotch, and Scotch-Irish. There are many girls whose given names are Caledonia, and some are named Binnie.

That veteran Foreign Missionary, Mrs. Hepburn of Japan, whose early home was in central North Carolina, tells a significant incident. She recalls the first trip she took with her husband after their marriage, more than fifty years ago, when with her father—a Presbyterian elder—they went up to the meeting of Synod—a great gathering in the woods like a camp meeting. She says there were eight hundred communicants there and all the services were in *Gaelic*.

Ownership of church buildings is another proof. A correspondent, having a very limited acquaintance in the mountain sections found one church building which originally belonged to Presbyterians and is now occupied entirely by other denominations. Another church, which originally belonged to Presbyterians, is now jointly owned by three other denominations, the Presbyterians retaining only one-fourth part of the ownership.

These facts remove this second objection, and warrant the opinion that many of the ancestors of these people were Presbyterian in their Church connection, as well as being of Scotch-Irish stock. Judge Smith says: "They have inherited the traditions of their ancestors, and their reverence for the Bible, and are tenacious of its teachings, and are not easily led off by heresies. The sturdy, loyal, faithful, tenacious traits of the Scotch-Irish Presbyterians are predominant, and the people remember with commendable pride from whom they are descended."

In reference to what brought the mountaineers into their present condition, J. R. Gilmore says: "Their ancestors being too poor or too conscientious to hold slaves, were, more than one hundred years ago, forced back to the mountains by the slaveholding planters of the seaboard and isolated there, and deprived of schools and churches. The present generation have grown up in ignorance of their rights and duties as American citizens." [At the present time the Public School fund of Western North Carolina does not average more than one dollar per annum for each child of school age. This is the state tax and it is the rare exception for any local tax to be laid. It can be readily seen that the public cannot be depended upon to educate the children of this generation; and the Mountain People are too poor to sustain private schools.] "The present condition of these people is directly traceable to slavery; for, in making the slave the planter's blacksmith, carpenter, wheelwright, and man-of-all-work, slavery shut every avenue of honest employment against the working white man and drove him to the mountains or the barren sand hills."

After the battle of King's Mountain, the surviving patriots suffered much distress from poverty, and from the British Army, and from the Tories. They had to bestir themselves for some means of livelihood. The young and vigorous who had few encumbrances, crossed the mountains into Tennessee and Kentucky, and got possession of the good lands. The older persons with families of children, or those who had aged parents to care for, reached the mountains and squatted on land that was not wanted, and supported themselves largely by hunting.

In 1792 Whitney invented the cotton gin. Cotton lands became more valuable; slaves did the work. The non-slaveholders could not find employment, either as artisans or as field hands. Those that were embarrassed and trying to hold their lands had to sell out; and thus an increased number had to betake themselves to the mountains. Some of those that had to remove west were able to go over the mountains into the lowlands as Jackson and others did. There were no schools in the mountains. There were few church privileges. There were few books, for even the few that were in the hands of the Colonists had been burnt with their houses; and they had no means with which to replace them. The first generation of children were much more illiterate than their parents. The houses were small. The youth married early and the neighbors helped the new couple to put up a small log cabin. Each succeeding generation was more illiterate than the preceding one. Idleness, hunting and poor soil, with their isolation, absence of schools, and churches without an educated ministry, have produced that condition of thriftlessness and poverty in which they are now found.

Another cause of their condition is found in the excessive use of tobacco by the women and children. There are but few women and girls in the mountain districts who do not dip snuff, and in many families it is given to very small children. This habit degrades the morals, and impairs the intellect of the people, besides adding to their shiftlessness and thriftlessness. If the women could be lifted above this degrading habit, the one-roomed log cabin would give place to comfortable houses.

They are still living in a chronic pioneer state, and will continue so to live until they are spurred on by personal contact with and the example of energetic, educated, spiritual-minded teachers and ministers to forget those things which are behind and press toward the ideals of their Scotch-Irish ancestry.

It is not necessary to enlarge upon the condition in which these descendants of brave, heroic and worthy ancestors are found. It is well known that they are very illiterate. They are poorly supplied with school and church privileges. The schools they have are ill-adapted to educate the children. The ministry is imperfectly qualified for its high calling. It is evident all the industries, including farming, suffer from the unprogressive spirit of the people who are too poor and too indifferent to do anything to remedy this state of things. It is an admitted principle of Christian duty to afford help and assistance to those who are in need. In accordance with this principle every denomination of Christians has a Home Mission Board to assist the small and feeble churches throughout country districts, and in the new and sparse settlements in the West to support churches and colleges. There are special efforts to help and succor the Mormons, the Indians and the Negroes. This is all as it should be, and the effort for them all ought to be greatly increased. But why is so little done for the Mountain Whites, whose numbers equal the entire population of the States of Oregon, Colorado and Washington? The Mountain People have a special claim upon those of us who are of the Scotch-Irish race and of the Presbyterian Church; they are bound to us by the double bonds of ancestry and of church relationship. During the time of our failure to supply them with gospel privileges, Methodist and Baptist churches were established. These denominations have done all in their power to furnish means and men for church work; but there still remains very much land to be possessed.

No denomination in the South is financially able to furnish an adequate number of schools and churches among the mountains, but the fact is recognized that all church interests are advanced by such aid as comes from the North; so, in the cause of God and humanity, they bid us a hearty welcome to this field where our "kith and kin" have fallen into a condition of ignorance and thriftlessness unworthy of their noble ancestry. Their latent Scotch-Irish characteristics are revived by the influence of good schools and the plain, practical, intelligent preaching and teaching of the Word of God. The Lord has been magnified through the work of the Holy Spirit in applying the Scripture taught in our schools to the hearts of the students and causing them to become "new creatures in Christ Jesus." From among this people, who have so long been passed by, the Master would call many laborers into His vineyard, if they were prepared for the service. Shall the Mountain People by their needs still longer appeal to us in vain? Shall the church membership, praying that young men and young women may be raised up for the ministry and for Christian teachers, be so engaged in schemes of their own devising that they will not wait before the Lord to have Him direct them to a sure way of answering their own prayers? The young people of the Southern Mountains have the brain, the brawn, the trend of mind needed by the church to-day. Money from church members is flowing by millions of dollars into institutions which furnish but few Christian workers. The money, no doubt, does a good work, but its work is not of the nature of that "better part" wherein no loss will be suffered in the coming trial by fire (I. Cor. 3: 10-15).

Will not the Presbyterian Church, with an energy and earnestness born of Christian sympathy, awaken to the greatness of the occasion, and engage in well devised and persistent efforts to communicate to these mountaineers the rich blessings of church and educational advantages which they so much need? When a few years ago Charleston was desolated by an earthquake, and Memphis and Jackson were visited with the pestilence, a general and deep sympathy was felt for those who were suffering from these calamities. Large contributions were made and earnest and self-sacrificing laborers went to their relief. These people in the mountains are suffering from poverty and ignorance, the result of long-continued and cruel circumstances. Will not Presbyterians cherish in their hearts a deep Christian sympathy for our fellow citizens who have met with most distressful calamities, and use their best efforts to bring them into the full possession of our best industrial and Christian progress? "Whoso hath this world's goods, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" In the midst of a naval battle a neutral officer assisted his own kith against a strange people, declaring that "blood was thicker than water." Now when patriotism, the ties of a common ancestry and faith, and the obligations of Christian love and sympathy all conjoin to induce us to engage in those efforts that will be fruitful of such great results, will we not heartily engage in the blessed work?

The Woman's Board and the Board of Home Missions are hindered from increasing their school and church work indefinitely only from lack of funds. Are these not grounds for encouragement in commencing such work: that the children are apt to learn; that the parents will send them; that they will acquire habits of industry and thrift; that they will become useful and industrious citizens and Christian workers? The testimonies on all these points are abundant and most gratifying from all those who are engaged in teaching among them.

The sum of $600 will erect a home for teachers in any mountain district, and $1000 additional a good building to be used for school work and for preaching service. The people of a district will gladly furnish building site free of cost and give help in erecting of buildings to the extent of their ability. The annual expenses of carrying on a day school in the mountain district with two teachers is about $500. By means of this expenditure one hundred children can be in school nine months of the year. The sum of $2000 or $3000 will build and equip a good house for academical work in the county seats, where such schools are greatly needed, and from which center their influence would extend to the bounds of the county. Money is also needed for the endowment of Industrial, and Normal Boarding Schools, ministers' and teachers' salaries, for permanent scholarships, and for annual scholarships. All money for school work should be sent to the treasurer of the Woman's Board, 156 Fifth Avenue, New York, N. Y.

The Presbyterians have some special advantages for engaging in the work. There is at Asheville, N. C., the Home Industrial

School, where one hundred and fifteen young women are being trained for usefulness in industrial work and, at the same time, securing such an intellectual and Christian education as prepares them to become teachers in the county public and private schools. Another school for young women, located at the same place and with a building to accommodate about two hundred and twenty-five students, is the Normal and Collegiate Institute. It is a school for higher education, where the course is equal to that of our best State Normal Schools in the North. There are two other schools for young women, one accommodating fifty students, the Dorland Institute at Hot Springs, N. C., and the other of the same capacity, the Laura Sunderland Memorial at Concord, N. C. The Boys' Farm School, located at Swannanoa, N. C., eight miles from Asheville, has room for one hundred boys. Its course of study is about the same as that of the Home Industrial School, and the boys desiring higher education can complete the course in one of the colleges in East Tennessee. These colleges are not Mission schools, but are under the care of the Synod of Tennessee. Besides the five boarding Schools named, the Woman's Board have under their care in North Carolina, Tennessee and Kentucky, twenty-two Day schools or Mission Stations. In these boarding and day schools over 2500 students are gathered.

All these schools, established for the Christian Education of the young people of the Southern Mountain Region have a constant struggle for life against poverty. Those in charge of their finances must devise such means and practice such close economy that the rehearsal or these things would bring swift sympathy and help from thoseof our church who are living in ease and luxury if attention and interest could be aroused to the need and outcome of Mission Work among the mountains of our Southland. Students must be refused entrance into our schools because there is not sufficient funds to supplement what support they, themselves, can furnish. Districts, pleading for Christian day schools, cannot be supplied. Congregations, starving for the Word of Life, must go unfed. The following tender and earnest appeal of the distinguished Rev. John Hall, D.D., may touch the hearts of some of our Lord's stewards.

"There are still numbers of our Scotch-Irish countrymen that are in comparative ignorance and comparative poverty, in need of friends, in need of loving agencies to be brought to bear upon them. Descriptions have been given to me of some of these men, women and children in the valleys between the mountains of this magnificent region, where the public schools do not provide and have not provided adequate opportunities for teaching; where a strong, sturdy, vigorous race has grown up combating with external difficulties, but with comparatively little education, and in many cases without the means of grace. Whenever you can, hold out a loving hand to them; wherever you can, send the Sunday school teacher to them; wherever you can, send the minister to them; wherever you can, try to bring to bear upon them the forces that made our race in the face of innumerable difficulties, and do so in the fear and love of God. They are of our blood; they are of our race; they bear our names; they have gone through hard struggles. If we can hold out to them a loving, brotherly, gentle, Christian hand and lift them up, we shall be doing good to the land; we shall be doing indescribable good to them; and we shall be honoring those who gave us the benefits and the blessings for which we are to be profoundly thankful to our Creator."

Written by REV. A. P. HARPER, D.D., Pittsburgh, Pa., March, 1893.

Revised and condensed by MISS FLORENCE STEPHENSON,
Asheville, N. C., September, 1895.

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Mrs. Darwin R. James, President.
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WOMAN'S BOARD OF HOME MISSIONS
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156 FIFTH AVE., NEW YORK, N. Y.

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(516 Market St., Pittsburgh, Pa.)

[*No part of this letter is to be copied in any publication.*]

ALLANSTAND,
STACKHOUSE, P. O., N. C., February, 23, 1898.

DEAR FRIENDS:

The building at Allanstand was not begun until the first of November, but the unusually fine weather throughout the month enabled the builders to push on the work so that by the time the rainy and cold season began the house was covered in and ready for use.

On the second day of December, Miss Merchant and I met at Mrs. Gahagan's, and the next day, Friday, in a pouring rain, we rode to Allanstand. Everything was in confusion; the workmen everywhere; but they and we worked with such a will that by Saturday night not only was the house in tolerable order, but we were giving a dinner party! our guests, the four workmen from Asheville and Weaverville and the two from the Allanstand neighborhood. Canned goods supplied the deficiencies in our larder, and a candle at each end of the table did duty instead of lamps, as no kerosene had yet been obtained. It was a most successful feast, enjoyed by every one of us. The shades for the windows had not come, and we had hung up for the time some hymns stencilled on muslin—"very instructive window blinds," as a visitor remarked.

After dinner we gathered around the open fire, some on chairs and some on trunks and boxes, and the carpenters from a distance told us how great an interest they had taken in building the house, knowing the purpose for which it was to be used, and how they had built with prayer and driven the nails "by faith." And before the little company broke up we sang a hymn from the window curtain and had prayers together.

These workmen were staying until Monday that they might be present at the first service held in the new house on Sunday afternoon, and a good service it was.

The cottage, besides the living rooms, has a large room designed for mothers' meetings and for other such uses. Until the school-house can be built, this must answer the purpose both for day and Sunday-school. Time, as well as funds, were lacking to plaster the cottage; so that the studding and the rough boarding form the walls of our rooms at present. With plenty of wood at hand with which to keep up big fires, we have managed to live through the cold weather in tolerable comfort, especially as we have had the hope of being able to finish the house next summer to cheer us. Our neighbors think us very well off already. "Why, the house is plumb double!" since it has rough boarding as well as weather boarding to keep out the cold.

The day-school began on December 8 with about thirty scholars, and the roll soon increased to forty-five. It is a delight to see them gather of a morning, a bright-hued little flock pouring over the hill from the Shelton settlement and others coming from up and down the Creek. The thick homespun dresses give the girls such a comfortable roly-poly look; the boys are in brown homespun jeans overalls, or in home-made flannel of vivid red and purple dye.

They are bright children and such a happy set. It seems to be such a delightful thing to come to school, and, strange to say, almost all come with the intention of learning, and, therefore, they do learn. We have a number of celebrities. Moody and Sankey are there, of course, General, Colonel and Columbus, all from one family; Savoy Alcove Gillian, by way of a fancy name, and Alpha comes, without O-meggie, who is still too young.

The chart and the blackboards are considered wonderful novelties, and the absence of the blue-backed speller an astonishing fact, for that is the only text book used in many a district school until this day.

On the second Sunday after our arrival our Sunday-school was started. The Sunday-school that we visited last spring was kept up faithfully all summer by Mr. Arwood, but was disbanded when the weather became too cold for meeting in the old log school-house. Mr. Arwood takes a class in our school, and every Sunday we feel that there is a real increase of interest. The singing, led by one of the neighbors, is most hearty, and seemed at first the chief attraction to many. We feel now that the real purpose of a Sunday School begins to be understood.

As we go about among the people and learn to know them better, their spiritual destitution becomes more and more apparent, and presses upon our hearts with greater power. It is true, as one remarked to us: "The Christians is mighty scatterin' here." There are only three persons in the community that I know to be true Christians, though there are many Church members of various names, and many of respectable and moral life. The place has been left to one side by the preachers in the surrounding country, and this makes it easier for us.

Within a few miles the primitive or hard-shell Baptists hold occasional preaching services and foot washings. This is the account given of them by one of our neighbors: "They don't know nothin', and they don't want to know nothin'. They thank the Lord they hain't no larnin' so's they ain't all pomped up with pride of larnin'. They don't *believe* nothin'; they don't know nothin' *to* believe. They pray the Lord to make 'em more ignorant than they be."

In the house nearest us, a quarter of a mile away, lives a man who was concerned, with four others, in a most unprovoked and cold-blooded murder a few years ago. As it could not be proved which did the actual killing, they were merely sentenced to short terms in the penitentiary, which are now expired. Almost every night we hear our neighbor shouting on the road mad with drink. His mother is an invalid, and I go in to see her now and then. She has spells of the "deathly jerks," or the "deathly grab," she tells me, which will carry her off some day.

Some of you will remember the woman and child who ran away from us in terror last spring, when we tried to give notice of the service to be held the next day. I was determined, now that I was settled in the neighborhood, to have a nearer view of her, and by seemingly careless inquiries I learned who she was and opened negotiations for wool through a neighbor.

So one bright afternoon, not long ago, I rode to Tennessee. Perhaps this is the place to explain that it is not the pony Cherokee who serves us in the Laurel country. It was only too certain that her small size made her unsuited to a region of deep and often dangerous fords, so she was left for the use of Miss Gorbold, at Brittain's Cove, and the gentle and spirited Fleet, who never loses his head in water or out of it, is now our companion on journeys short and long. But to return to the Tennessee line, which is about three miles from Allanstand, I rode on a mile or two further, till I reached the flat where we had seen the woman, and found the wood road, up which she had disappeared. Following this for a little distance, I came out into a clearing, where stood a large log house, with out-buildings, the whole looking fairly comfortable, but remote. The very clutter on the porch, loom, saddles, harness, and what not, made one feel that few strangers ever came. Mrs. L. appeared at the door and made me welcome, evidently expecting my visit. Everything in the house was rude, and it was not very clean, but there was a not unhome-like look about it all, even with the quantity of salted "meat" (pork) that was piled on a large board in the middle of the room and in "gums," because "it was spoilin' in the barn."

A little girl, dressed in bright, home-made linsey, slipped in, and then another, just one size smaller. I learned that "the baby one" was named Myrtle, while the older one was Martha. Two had gone to a buryin'. There were eleven in all. "Three is married—well, four—three girls is married, and Marion, my oldest boy, he's *ben* married, but he and his wife's parted; he's in jail for sellin' whiskey; ben in there five months. My comfort is that while he's in there he's safe; while he's in jail he cain't get killed or crippled." That is, in a fight with revenue officers.

So last April Marion was at large and unconvicted, and thinking we were "revenues" Mrs. L. had good cause to run from us. Now that he is in jail, his mother is free to speak of him, for, of course, there is no disgrace about it to her way of thinking. Indeed, she mentioned it four or five times. "My oldest son in jail, and his wife doin' bad," she exclaimed once.

She brought some homespun yarn from the loft, and we made a trade. There was some spun from the wool of a *black sheep* which she intended to make into jeans for Marion, for "when he comes out he'll be needin' some clothes." Very appropriate garments they will be.

The two little girls took my heart. I am sure they would develope into such dear, capable girls under the right training. They go to the nearest district school. "Could they read?" "No." "What books did they study?" "Bluebackpeller" (all in one breath). "Nothing else?" "No." While her mother was upstairs Martha pointed suddenly to the window-sill and confided to me: "There's our cake of soap." And there it was, sure enough, a genuine cake of pink toilet soap.

Before leaving, I suggested having prayers, and Mrs. L. consented without enthusiasm—in a manner which I have known to cover great pleasure, and in other cases indifference. She bade me wait until she called the boys, who were hauling wood. It took them some time to hitch the mule, and then they filed in—two grown boys and a younger one All listened with respect to the reading and explanation. Mrs. L.'s face showed real interest. How I wish that we might gain a hold on this family.

On almost every Sunday some from Tennessee come to our Sunday-school, and now that we are to have preaching twice a month the number will increase.

Mr. McGaw comes from Hot Springs every other Sunday. We are so glad and so thankful to have this great help, and the field is ripe for his work.

The people are—in one sense, at least—"poor in spirit," and some of them are awaking to their poverty, and so are ready to receive the blessing.

The lack of response to spiritual ideas was most painful at first, after the quick interest shown in the congregation at Brittain's Cove, but the work of the Spirit has begun here; and, though it may be long before the fruit is ready to be gathered in, we are sure of the harvest.

Yours sincerely,

FRANCES L. GOODRICH.

[illegible]

WOMAN'S BOARD OF HOME MISSIONS OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
156 FIFTH AVE., NEW YORK, N. Y.

[illegible]

[illegible]

In the Laurel Country.

The following extracts are from a letter written by a friend who has recently visited our day schools. Writing from Allanstand she says:

"With real reverence I can say I feel as if I had come up to the Mount of Transfiguration. These missionaries and teachers seem to live transfigured lives, and their faces shine with a beauty and happiness that can come only from the beautiful souls within." . . .

"About eleven o'clock Tooney Thomas drove up with his pair of stout mules and a bright green lumber wagon. We had been warned that our ride would be rough, slow and cold so we prepared for it accordingly. But as it was the middle of the day and the sun was bright and warm and there was no wind we made our trip very comfortably although we were bounced around tremendously. Such roads I never imagined, though no doubt you and Uncle James know all about mountain roads, following the course of streams, up and down steep, steep places and full of stones and rocks. I know ever so many people who could not have taken that four hours' ride without being really ill from fright, but we enjoyed it immensely. The mountains closed about us with their towering trees and glossy laurel, the rushing streams like the Sacramento river at Shasta Springs, and the beautiful views down narrow gorges, all were new and wonderful to us. We forded the creeks in nine places and finally reached Miss Goodrich's cosy cottage which nestled at the very foot of a steep hill, and were very warmly welcomed by Miss Goodrich herself. Here with Miss Goodrich lives Miss Allen, the teacher in the little school house, Miss Daniels, another helper, and Gazza, cook and friend. Miss Allen is a product of the Home Industrial and Normal Schools, and Miss Daniels is an Illinois girl, spending her first year here. Gazza keeps house, feeds the horse and pig, teaches the smallest children in Sunday school, takes care of everybody, and is an invaluable member of the household. Miss Goodrich is most fascinating and the charm endures. She is as full of fire as she can be, and yet has a sweet earnestness and sincerity beautiful to see. She took us to call on old Mrs. C a neighbor, who has the 'deathly jerks', and we heard the old woman's story of her hardships when her husband was 'conscripted' and how he was supposed to be dead by all but herself. How she had a dream time after time of seeing a great fish and taking it home, and how the oldest boy, 'he says it favors Pap', and how she got a dream book 'took from Scripter' and it said he would come soon and he did.

"On Friday afternoon, with Miss Fish of the Gahagan school as pilot, we started for Shelton Laurel, seven miles distant. I rode a big sorrel who moved with the grace of a camel and was mighty 'unsartain' about his hind feet in going down hill, and Jennie was mounted on an old horse named Lucy V., the property of a neighbor.

"We were nearly three hours covering the seven miles for if we tried to hurry our horses on occasional level places, they shook us nearly off their backs. Most of the way was either up or down or fording. We forded inineteen times. We reached Shelton Laurel just before school closed and hurried into the school house. Of 62 children enrolled 43 bear the name of Shelton. It was not a company of good-looking, well-dressed children, but many of them had interesting faces. They sang for us and such voices as some of the boys had were enough to raise the roof. I spoke afterward of one boy in particular who would make a good Methodist preacher he could shout so, and learned that the boy in question is out of jail on bail, and that there is not a large boy in school who has not been under arrest. Miss Merchant, the teacher, is a girl whom Jennie and I helped to a summer school course a few years ago. She is proving herself a very capable and useful teacher and missionary.

"Her cosy cottage was very neat- she does the work herself with the help of a little sister. Her oldest brother, who is a carpenter, is engaged to build the church and manse at Big Laurel, is with her, and with the visitors, made quite a family. The society which furnished the cottage had not counted on so many, so chairs, plates of a size and silver fell short, but we heard no excuses, and Miss Merchant was a most graceful and self-possessed hostess.

"By invitation Jennie and I stopped over one train at Marshall and drove with Mr. Polhemus two and a half miles to see the Walnut Springs school. At Marshall one of the teachers, Miss Fish, is a bright and interesting girl from Sacramento. We reached Asheville at ten o'clock last night and I find myself very tired, but it was all wonderful to me, and the people were an inspiration. God grant that I may be more in earnest and of more use than ever before."

Mrs. Darwin R. James, President.
Mrs. Frederick H. Pierson, Corresponding Secretary.
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(516 Market St., Pittsburgh, Pa.)

[*No part of this letter is to be copied in any publication.*]

BRITTAIN'S COVE, WEAVERVILLE, N. C.

DEAR FRIENDS:

Most of you have heard of the journey made last April by a party of four missionaries, who drove through the mountains to Tennessee; of their passing through the rough country watered by the Laurel and its tributaries, a country of evil repute, full of moonshiners and therefore of deeds of violence. You have heard too of the Sunday spent at the Widow Gahagan's on the Shelton Laurel, and of the service held in a tiny log school-house four miles from there at Allen's Old Stand on the little Laurel or Allen Creek. If you have read of all this you know too how the need of the people cried out for them, and how we felt that God had sent us there that we might know the need and meet it.

And so through the summer each one of us has been praying and working for the people of Laurel, and now, thanks to God, we are able to make a beginning and to start a day-school there. So I send out this bulletin that you who have been interested and who have been working and praying with us may know how the work speeds.

It was necessary, first of all, to raise a special fund for building a teacher's home, and for a school-house; for the log-cabin where we held a service last spring is too ill lighted and too well ventilated to use as a school-house, even were it large enough for the purpose. This fund has been growing through the past five months until we have now enough to make a beginning. May we rely on you to enable us to finish?

The salary for the day-school teacher is partly pledged; we hope that the full amount both for buildings and salary will be received before long. During the summer the people of Allenstand have been asking for a school, writing to Rev. Mr. Fox at Swannanoa repeatedly, to tell him how much they wanted advantages for their children. In July Mr. Fox visited them and preached to an audience as attentive as on the first occasion, and they talked to him of their willingness to do their part if we would come to their help.

Toward the end of September three of us, Mr. Fox, Miss Gorbold and myself, made another trip to Laurel to decide the matter of location; for before we could promise to place the school at Allenstand the needs of other communities in that wild Laurel country had to be considered—for instance, Spill Corn Creek, Lick Log Branch and Sodom. So we started one morning from Brittain's Cove in the Farm School carryall with the same trusty mules that brought us safely through flood and mire last spring. The road is dry enough now, and the creek low, but the mountain road is as stony as ever, and it was nightfall before we reached the Widow Gahagan's, where a hearty welcome awaited us.

Our investigations soon led us to the conclusion that if we wished to go where the need and the opportunity were greatest we should make the settlement at Allenstand. Until the last four years there was no school nearer than five miles across mountains which make the mountains at Brittain's Cove seem insignificant. It was impossible for the children on Allen Creek to attend school at all. Two years ago the school districts were divided and the public school money also, so as to give to Allenstand $38 a year with which to provide school-house and teacher for 49 children. This sum was stretched to the utmost and six weeks' school held during the year. Just before our first visit one of the logging hands at the sawmill, a Christian man, started a Sunday-school. Before this, as far as we could learn, no religious services had ever been held there. In the hope of help from us this Sunday-school has been kept up all summer. All feel the need of a leader, especially the one who has done his best to fill that place for a time.

On the morning after our arrival at Mrs. Gahagan's, on this our second visit, we drove to Allenstand, making a call on the way at Mr. Brignian's, meeting again his boys, Moody and Sankey, whose acquaintance we had made before. Arriving at the school-house, we looked for a site for the new home, and found a charming place on gently rising ground close by a fine spring, with hemlock and oak woods on two sides. Here we ate the luncheon that we had brought with us, not without giving thanks for the good inheritance unto which the Lord had led us.

The day after this Mr. Fox had promised to hold a service at the log school-house. We drove there early, and while the preacher spent an hour under the trees for the quiet thought impossible to secure in a crowded house, the owner of the land ran out the lines of the four-acre lot that we had chosen. He was assisted in this by a number of the leading citizens and I, too, went along "through bush and brake" to show him what we wanted. Miss Gorbold stayed near the school-house while the crowd gathered and at first she had enough to do answering Sankey's questions. He is in a wonderful hurry for the school. "See 'em up yonder, they're runnin' it out and she's stayin' by 'em. Look at her now. I don't reckon she'll have a acre, 'cause I heard him say 36 rod. But, yes, they is a acre, too; it only takes 13 rods to make a acre—12 or 13—more than 12 and not 13." "Is she a comin' here to teach—when will she begin?"

By and by up the hill floated a wild music; the chief singers had gathered outside the house, and were filling the interval before the service by singing one hymn after another. Softened by distance the effect was weird and moving. At three o'clock the service began and again I saw those faces intent in listening to the word which comes to them so seldom. Some strong men were moved to tears. Even a dog fight which began outside the shutterless doorway only called a glance from one or two boys.

How can any one help wanting to go to these simple-hearted, hungry people, instead of to those who have no ears to hear! These three preaching services have prepared the ground for our going in, as nothing else could have done.

After the service we talked a little more about the school. The people promised the public money, and when I said that it would not be right for them to expect to receive a free school for six or eight months for $38, they all agreed that they would value it the more if they paid a slight tuition for part of the time, and one man said, "When you come here to live you'll be needing eggs and chickens and other things; now, instead of sending a dozen eggs off to market and getting perhaps five or six cents for them, people can just give them to their children to bring to school for you."

As we drove back to the Gahagans' for the night, Sankey came behind us on muleback on his way to mill with a sack of corn. He began, "When will the school begin?" "Just as soon as the house is built." "When will the house be built?" "As soon as the lumber is sawed." "When will the lumber be sawed?" "They mean to saw it at once;" and with that he had to be satisfied.

This letter would not be complete without mention of the interest that the people in Brittain's Cove take in this plan to give to the Laurel people what they have received themselves. One Sunday morning I told them how we had fared on our journey and of the start that had been made, and told them too that they might look on the new school as an offshoot of their own, to which they were bound to give their interest and their prayers. And the two or three prayers that followed showed how fully they had entered into the spirit of the enterprise. One prayed that the Lord would be on their side and would help them in the fight so that they could spare "part of our friends" to those so much in need.

And now I have just returned from a third visit to Allenstand to make the final arrangements for the building. This trip was a combination of horseback, muleback and railroad. The saddle-bags filled with necessaries for a three-days' trip were slung over the saddle of the pony, Cherokee, and off we went to Alexander, six miles away. From there by train down the valley of the French Broad to Stackhouse, a flag station, where friends from Laurel were waiting with mules and horses to take us over the Walnut Mountains. I had heard the road from Stackhouse evil spoken of, but the steepness and roughness surpassed anything I had met with before. I wondered no longer at the price charged for hauling from there. It cannot pay to haul at any price, and yet over this apology for a road must come all the brick, lime, nails and dressed lumber for the house, in fact everything except the rough lumber that can be sawed at Allenstand, for even this will be more practicable than to haul from any other point.

It was growing dark when we reached the fords, and I was glad that the streams were low as the mules splashed through the holes and over the rocks which make the crossing so dangerous when the water is up. I began to ponder seriously how Cherokee with her short legs would manage to cross in winter.

Now we are at the gate, and the Widow Gahagan herself comes out in the gathering dusk to greet us and to bring us into the firelight which gleams through the open door-way. The next day was spent in the saddle, visiting the house lot with the builder, who had come from Asheville, going to the saw mill, doing much business and learning to know some of my future neighbors by the way. My mule was not to be hurried, and from the safe eminence of its back I had more leisure than ever before to survey the glen and wonder at the enormous thickets of rhododendron (the mountain laurel), and to take delight in the rushing stream and the exquisite beauty of the forest with the changing color and the falling of the leaf.

Near the saw mill were men with teams hauling great hemlock logs to be sawed into lumber for our house, and the air was spicy with the branches strewed on every side. We stopped to rest a few minutes at the old Allenstand house which was the drovers' tavern long ago, when this was the only stock road through the mountains from Kentucky to South Carolina. Here are now five children waiting for our school to begin. Two of the boys had undertaken to make 6,000 shingles for us, and they were off "huntin' 'em a tree." Afterwards when we were again at the house lot, watching the men at work leveling the ground, we heard a mighty crash in the forest above, and soon the boys came out of the woods. The pine they had felled proved to be twisted, they said, and so of no use for the hand-made shingles. They joined the group around the digging. One man was "studyin'" how he could manage to do some of our hauling. He thought "it mought be 'et he cud git ole man Payne his l-eetle hoss and hitch him aside of his own mew-el." I left him still meditating and went down the wood path to the spring, meeting another neighbor on the way with strips of red dog-wood bark which he had cut to make a tea for his "old woman, bein' as she was sickly." He assured me it was as good as quinine. Then I mounted the mule again and jogged back to the Gahagans', through the solemn and beautiful woods of hemlock and rhododendron mingled with lighter growth. Two young women mounted on one horse rode by greeting me with bright smiles. By a recent marriage to an old man the youngest of the women has become the stepmother of the other.

The neighborhood wore so peaceful a look that sunny afternoon that it would have been impossible to realize that I was in the wicked Laurel country, had it not been for facts brought to my knowledge, facts which show that under all the fair seeming are unrestrained passions in human hearts, breaking out often in evil deeds. While this knowledge startles and saddens us, it braces us too for the work which lies to our hands.

It will not be many weeks now before Miss Merchant and I can go there to stay; she is to take charge of the day-school while I undertake the other missionary work.

And with the prayers of God's people here and in the North, we trust that we may go in the strength of the Lord and take possession of Allenstand for Him.

Yours sincerely,

OCT. 16, 1897.

FRANCES L. GOODRICH.

[Miss Goodrich may be addressed at Stackhouse, N. C.—EDITOR.]

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(516 MARKET ST., PITTSBURGH, PA.)

No. 6. [*No part of this letter is to be copied in any publication.*]

ALLANSTAND,
P. O. STACKHOUSE, N. C., Nov. 18, 1898.

DEAR FRIENDS:

It is almost a year since the Allanstand School was started, and during that time such progress has been made in divers ways that we sometimes look about us in amazement—and always with praise at the things God has wrought for us.

Miss Merchant returned early in July and on Aug. 8th reopened school, this time in the neat school house of one room which was built last spring about 200 yards from the cottage. There is something in the shape or arrangement of the school-room that gives an unusually cheerful air to it, and the faces of teachers and pupils reflect all the brightness around. It is the happiest school I have ever seen. The children appreciate this comfortable school house. One boy said it was the first plastered house ever he saw.

The desks and the blackboards failed to arrive in time, but doing without them for a month made all enjoy them the better when they did come. There are maps, too, on the walls, which give an idea, even to the youngest, that the world is a big place, extending far beyond Madison County.

After two and a half months of free school, we called a meeting of parents and laid before them our plan of charging a small tuition for the rest of the eight months' term. Ways and means of paying this were talked over and the men promised, besides paying tuition, to supply wood for the school.

Finding that the tuition was so small, and that it could be paid in work, or in corn, fodder, or other "truck," as well as in money, the parents have continued to send their children, and in many cases the tuition for the current month is already paid. The attendance is more regular than before, 35 being the average number even on these rainy autumn days. "They say" that last winter was very open, and that we shall find out this year what the Laurel country really is in winter, but we shall keep the school open as long as the children can come.

Early in the fall we all determined to have a school flag. Each pupil brought two cents, the older boys earning their contribution, and in one way and another the fund grew large enough to buy a flag 6x10 feet. Its size so far surpassed the children's expectations that at first view they could only smile and stare. Little Saviny's dimple was deeper than ever as she bubbled over into a ripple of laughter and than ran off with the others to talk it over. Two weeks ago we had a flag-raising, and to all of us it seemed a most successful occasion. There were exercises and songs by the school and two speeches—for we had with us our Synodical Missionary, Dr. Duncan, and our preacher, Mr. McGaw. All this was inside the house—then the school marched out and formed a semicircle around the flag-pole, which had been placed on rising ground at one side of the school house. It was raining softly, but no one minded that. Three of the smallest boys stepped forward and hauled up the flag. The school recited "Hats off, along the street there comes," etc., and then saluted the flag.

The exercises were closed with prayer, and the boys could then give further vent to their patriotic feeling by lighting a huge bonfire of brush which they had piled for the occasion.

Eack week one boy is chosen as Keeper of the Flag. He wears a badge of office and has the honor of raising the flag at the beginning of school hours.

The meetings for mothers have been started. In the first afternoon of interviews with eighteen women one after another, I found out more about their real dispositions and characters than in many months of occasional visits. I think we shall all enjoy the meetings when they are well going. The women are at work on the silk balls for the woven tapestry, and two or three quilts are started, one called "Eight ways of contrariness."

F. N. has fulfilled his promise to his little girls that they should come to school, and pays their board through the week at one of our neighbors', as he lives too far for the children to go and come daily. They are so happy—though at first a little afraid. As some one said: "All the little rabbits about here will be getting tamed after a while."

F. N. has not only "quit his meanness," but entered upon a new life I don't think we fully realized how thoroughly he was a new man till we saw a little tintype of him taken with one of his children some time ago. In place of the bright, happy face and frank eyes we are accustomed to see now, was the dogged, sullen, unsatisfied look seen in so many mountaineers—a look as if hopeless of finding anything worth living for.

Dr. Duncan has just closed a series of meetings here, preaching twice daily for a week. There was much interest shown, and a number made open profession of their faith in Christ. Almost all of these had been thoughtful for some time, but were confirmed or brought to a decision during the meetings. Those whom we counted as Christians last spring are standing firm, and have developed much. Four heads of families, with their wives, have started on the pilgrimage to the heavenly city. May they take their children with them.

Five pupils in the day school are hoping in Christ, others are deeply impressed.

No longer do we need to say that the "Christians are mighty scatterin' here," for the Lord is gathering His own under His Shepherd care. Do you wonder that His praises are on our lips?

But there is yet very much land to be possessed and we have this confidence, that the Lord means it for our possession. Will you not ask great things of Him for us, for there are strongholds of evil here, and of ourselves we have no might against them.

Yours sincerely,

FRANCES L. GOODRICH.

Mrs. Darwin R. James, President.
Mrs. Frederick H. Pierson, Cor. Secretary.
Miss M. Josephine Petrie, Young People's Sec'y.
Miss S. F. Lincoln, Treasurer.

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Mrs. C. E. Coulter, Cor. Sec. of Freedmen's Dept.
(516 Market St., Pittsburgh, Pa.)

No. 7. *[No part of this letter is to be copied in any publication.]*

ALLANSTAND SCHOOL,
P. O. STACKHOUSE, N. C., Feb. 28, 1899.

DEAR FRIENDS:

As December and January went by, with plenty of bad weather, but with none out of the ordinary, we began to speak lightly of the prophets who had foretold a hard winter—from the high-hung hornets' nests and other such signs. But we laughed too soon. With February came rain, falling so fast that in one night the creeks rose to an unusual height, and while they were still flush came the snow and cold which we shared with the rest of the country. For nine days the mail could not go or come, though the carrier made brave efforts to get through. One whole day he wandered, with another mountaineer, trying to find a way through the mountains to the railroad and so avoid the streams. They were bewildered by the dense fog and toward night found that they were within a mile or two of home, having made a circuit. So sure were they that they were in Tennessee, on the other side of the mountains, that they walked a mile on the Allanstand road before a peculiar and well-known foot-log brought them to a sense of their whereabouts. One of them enjoyed the joke, but the other "didn't laugh then and he hasn't laughed since," but is filled with wrath to think of it.

At last the blockade was broken for a day or two. It was a sensation worth having to receive the loaded bag that came back from Stackhouse, and to know that the letters which had been piling up here had gone, and that our friends would soon know of our health and comfort. Then the cold laid its hand on the waters and again communication with the outside world was cut off.

Up to this time the school had kept up well, though the attendance had dropped from 35 to 14. Some of the little children would arrive crying with cold in spite of their stoicism, and would be set to thaw out in front of the parlor fire before going to the schoolhouse. When the mercury sank to 6° below, only one scholar appeared, and school was given up for a week. Sixteen degrees below zero was the lowest temperature recorded here. Many of the thermometers had no provision for such weather and the mercury went into the ball and stayed there, an example which one of the boys said was a good one to follow. The most that any of us could do for ten days was "to sorter keep from freezin'," as a neighbor expressed it.

The twelfth of February had been set for the forming of the Allanstand Mission. Three men with their wives had signified their desire to join on profession of faith, and these, with Miss Merchant and myself, would make up a mission of eight members. It was thought best to give to us the help of association as church members and the privilege of the Lord's Supper, trusting that others who, though Christians, still held back would come forward when once a beginning was made.

The bad weather made it doubtful whether Mr. McGaw could cross the icy trail from Hot Springs, and we had almost settled it in our minds that the occasion to which we had looked forward with such eagerness was to be postponed until the next time of his coming. But on Saturday noon he appeared with an elder from the Hot Springs Church. It was not so cold that day and they had pushed through. Those who were to unite with us live at some distance, but on Saturday afternoon two of the women and one of the men came here to meet the session and were received. The evening settled in gray and lowering and on Sunday we woke to find a white world, and the snow still gathering fast. Could any of those most concerned reach here was our first thought, but we went on preparing for the Communion Service, which was to be held after Sunday-school, in place of the regular morning service. At half-past nine we opened Sunday-school as usual. There were a dozen here besides our own household. Others came in, and among them, all the candidates except the two women who had been examined the day before. Mr. and Mrs. T., who had lately moved across the Tennessee line, walked four miles through the blinding storm to be here. F. N. had come still further from another direction, and Mr. S. nearly as far. And so we received together the holy supper, the whiteness outside shutting us in as if by the hand of God from the disturbing gaze of those who would have gathered from curiosity. The few outsiders there were our friends, even if they were not yet ready to join us in remembering our common Lord. Never had the feast seemed more precious or full of meaning—the world shut out, the joy of heaven over repentant sinners over us and the peace of God within.

All except F. N. had been baptized before, so he was the only one to whom the rite was administered that day. You will remember perhaps what has been written about him in former letters. Until ten months ago he could not read a word, but on becoming a Christian an ambition seized him to know something—an ambition that has needed great force of character and perseverance to gratify—for he has his family to provide for, and the extra expense of keeping his two little girls at school here. First he worked unusually hard all the fall and winter, so that by the middle of December he felt he could stop and come to school. Meanwhile he had learned his letters at home. Every day that he can spare he comes to the cottage and works away in the library, with occasional help. It is a hard job and I am sure that he would prefer the hardest kind of grubbing or plowing, but progress is made in reading, writing and figures, and he feels well paid. The whole countryside takes a keen interest in his studies, for he is a general favorite; others talk of coming to learn, but fail to find the time, not being determined to make it.

After our Christmas service and tree at Allanstand, which was held on December 23d, there were a number of gifts left over, and in the community where F. N. lives, four or five miles away, there were many children who had had no Christmas. The supply and need fitted together, and so on the Friday before New Year's a service was held in the house of F. N. The house is small—a double cabin—but F. N. and his wife had taken such pains to get it ready. One room had been cleared of its furniture and rough benches, made for the occasion, filled it except for the space just about the fireplace, where in one corner stood a little holly tree. The room was decorated with sprigs of holly and other evergreens, stuck into every crevice of the walls and under the smoke-blackened beams of the low ceiling. It was as faithful a copy as possible of the tree and decorations of the Allanstand Christmas.

But I must go back to tell how we rode there on mules and horse, through the long glen, through the Shelton-Laurel creek and up the long hill on to the ridge that overlooks the Big Laurel. The N. house is a quarter of a mile from the main road. As we came in sight of the gate we saw boys perched like crows on the fence. Some stayed to open the gate while others ran ahead to give the news of our coming. On the porch little girls in pink and purple dresses were looking out, and inside the room were many more children gazing at the empty tree. With difficulty they were induced to leave this pleasing sight and to go outside while Santa Claus was at work. At last everything was ready and the room was soon filled with women and children crowding each bit of space. The men and boys found places on the porch or leaned against the fence.

The service was short and simple. We spoke of the Lord Jesus Christ, of the strength of sin, and the power of Christ to free us from it. As always in the mountains, there was deep attention. Then the gifts were handed to the children. The presents were of less value than those given at the schoolhouse, but they gave no less pleasure. Not one of the 35 or 40 children there had ever seen a Christmas tree before. You would have thought this a very poor attempt at one, but in their eyes it was splendid. And you would have thought it worth something, too, had you been there and had understood what it all meant. How room had been found in that house for Christ since last Christmas, and how this service was a proof of the change that had come to the N.'s, and of their great desire to have their neighbors share in the blessings they had received.

There is a prospect for a day-school for this settlement, for the chief landowner, one of the Gahagans, proposes to put up a schoolhouse and to ask us to provide a teacher. There would be as many pupils there as at Allanstand. Much prejudice has been felt against us, and much talking done of our being either Romanists or Mormons, or both, but the Christmas service did much to remove this misapprehension and the prospect of a school has "holp the people up right smart."

We thought it would be well to have a good Sunday-school going by the time the schoolhouse was built, and the N.'s were most anxious for it. So, a few Sundays ago, I rode to the N.'s after luncheon, finding about twenty-five people waiting. We had an unconventional but interesting Sunday-school and it has been kept up since then with but one break on account of severe weather.

One Sunday Miss Merchant rode through creeks so swollen that the water reached the edge of the saddle. It would have been "plumb dangerous" had she been alone—or scared—but she had a trusty escort and never thought of fear. It is not the height of the water alone which makes the danger, but the force of the current which, in the Shelton-Laurel, is very great.

Since the short sessions of the district schools around us have ended, we have had a number of pupils from a distance. These are placed by their parents to board with neighbors of ours. One of these pupils is from the upper Shelton-Laurel, which, of all the Laurel country, is the part of most evil repute.

All around us it seems as though the ice which has bound so many in willing ignorance is melting, and that the spring time is come.

Yours sincerely,

FRANCES L. GOODRICH.

Mrs. [illegible], President.
Mrs. Frederick H. [illegible], Cor. Secretary.
Miss M. Josephine Petrie, Young People's Sec'y.
Miss S. F. Lincoln, Treasurer.

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(516 Market St., Pittsburgh, Pa.)

No. 8. [*No part of this letter is to be copied in any publication.*]

HOLDERNESS, N. H., July 17, 1899.

DEAR FRIENDS:

When I wrote you last, the Sunday-school in the Gahagan settlement had just been started. Through all the rough weather of February and March it was kept up, and when the better weather came, the increase in numbers made us all impatient for the new schoolhouse—the cabin being far too small to hold us. At last the people thought of a way out of the difficulty and asked for the use of an old tobacco barn. This they fitted up and transformed into a comfortable meeting place, Mr. Gahagan kindly giving the lumber needed as well as the barn. A floor was put in and a ceiling; the walls, which were already well chinked, were lined with plank; two glass windows were put in and a door; even a gate was swung in the Virginia rail-fence in front. The women tacked sheets of heavy wrapping paper on the walls and planted flowers outside, making a bed for these in the midst of the wheat which was springing up all around the barn.

The interest felt in the Sunday-school increased greatly; many came from curiosity, but liking what they heard, came again. A more earnest spirit showed itself. One lovely spring day a preaching service was held after the Sunday-school. There were more than one hundred persons assembled—far too many for the space, twenty feet square inside the barn; so the benches were carried out into the road, the only shady place at hand, and on these sat the women and children, while the men and boys found room on the bank above. In the middle of the sermon a caravan of gypsies came by. The congregation made room for them to pass, picking up the benches and then replacing them; but all were so intent on the message they were hearing that there seemed no break in the service.

As the Sunday-school increased in size, Miss Merchant usually accompanied me on Sunday afternoon from Allanstand. As we neared the place we would be joined by others on horses and mules or afoot, so that there would be a goodly number of pilgrims climbing the long hill beyond the ford together, and a picturesque procession we made. We did not always have "a critter apiece," but as we had learned to "pack double," that did not matter. In crossing a ford, indeed, one mule can carry a whole family at once—father, mother and two children.

Just before I left Allanstand, the last of May, Miss Harris, who had been teaching in Erwin, Tenn., came to open the day-school at Gahagan's. Preparations are being made for building the schoolhouse, but meanwhile the school is carried on in the transformed tobacco barn with many inconveniences. These are cheerfully borne by teacher and pupils, so glad are they to have any kind of schoolhouse.

Allanstand is in good hands during the vacation, for Miss Dean, from the Home Industrial School, is there with a friend, and the Sunday services are well kept up. In August Miss Merchant will reopen school.

We lost a few of our neighbors lately. One of these was a professing Christian when we came, and he seemed at first in earnest in helping his neighbors to better things, though he did not always go about this in the best way. We could not count on his help in Sunday-school, for his chimney had a habit of falling down and his cows of wandering on the Sabbath day which was a hindrance to his coming. In April a man from some distance came to his house and threatened him with a pistol, accusing him of having given information to the revenue officers, and giving him just so many days to leave the country. Mr. B. says he didn't tell on this man, but if he had it would not have been the first nor the last time that he had put the officers on the track of stills. But he declared that no civilized person could live in that settlement and, accompanied by his father and mother, and his brother's family as well as his own, he left us. The brother did not exactly go with them, for he had been in hiding from the officers for some time for running a still, so he departed by night, fleeing from the revenue officers, while his brother fled from the moonshiners. There was an amusing side to this, but we did not feel it when we saw the forlorn train, in wagons and on foot, passing our house—the old mother hardly able to say good-bye to us for tears—knowing, as we did so well, that they were too poor to move, and that the women and children could not fail to suffer in the new home.

Ever since we settled at Allanstand, I have had my eye on the region beyond to which Allanstand gives entrance, the upper Shelton-Laurel. Every one had a bad word for it, which seemed not wholly undeserved, to judge by the fact that there were last spring three men in Marshall jail from that community waiting trial for murder. I had heard something of the place, too, from a minister of the Southern Presbyterian Church, who had for a year or more a preaching station there, and who, being fully occupied in another part of the county, had with much courtesy handed the field over to us. He had been well received by the people, though the rumor that Presbyterians were the same as Roman Catholics had not failed to be diligently spread abroad. However, one man said he would rather have his children good Roman Catholics than Shelton-Laurel drunkards. In May we sent word that there would be a service on Friday afternoon in the Riley-Shelton schoolhouse, and on the Friday in question we set forth on horseback with the minister who was to preach. Hearing so much said by our neighbors about the "rough country," we expected to find the upper Shelton-Laurel more shut in by cliffs than the lower part of the creek, so our surprise was great, after going over the Shelton mountain and striking the creek some miles above its junction with Big Laurel, to find the valley widening out into fertile bottom lands. The houses were larger and the land better than at Allanstand. And so we found that the roughness was not in the country, but in the ways of the inhabitants. We passed on the way two licensed distilleries, and it is safe to say that we passed many unlicensed ones of whose whereabouts we were ignorant.

The Riley-Shelton schoolhouse stands quite alone, a little distance from the road, flat meadow lands around it, and the wooded mountain rising close behind. It is a large log house, well built, but out of repair. The people were slow to assemble. Two respectable-looking old women were the first to arrive. As one said, "I struck a notion that I'd come to hear them women preach, and I just struck out and come." Miss Merchant and I had a little talk with them, and while we were speaking of wool and of indigo dyeing, one threw up her arms with a despairing gesture and exclaimed, "I can't set my mind to any kind of work now. I'm in such trouble. One of my boys killed his brother four weeks ago." "I knew it, Judy; I've been thinkin' of you a heap," said the other.

Some girls came in dressed in poor finery, and three or four children and a party of young men, one too drunk to sit upright. The minister began the service. Some listened well, others whispered audibly all the time; the little girls wandered back and forth in the room, as suited them. The atmosphere reeked with whiskey, and we were aware that some of the women as well as the men had been drinking. When the sermon grew too direct, the young men rose and filed out as though they found the place too hot for them. Our neighbor, T. M., who was with us, led the singing, and afterwards said he knew the Lord had told us what hymns to choose, they fitted so well. During the closing song the men outside stole up to the windows to listen. The older men, who were sober and who had listened intently to the sermon, had much to say to us after the service about the need for a school, the large number of children within reach, and the wish that we should begin work. They offered land and lumber. We had many urgent invitations to go home with them and spend the night, and to come again. Meanwhile the young people were amusing themselves firing off pistols as they went down the creek.

About ten days after this, in company with another lady, I rode up again. It was on Monday and all was quiet on the Shelton-Laurel; no groups around the drinking places, no firing. It seems that it is always so the first of the week, and then toward the end the fun grows fast and furious. We made several calls and arranged for the coming of Mr. Rodgers of the University of Tennessee to teach a summer school during his vacation. At every house we met the most cordial hospitality, and with difficulty persuaded these new friends that it was necessary for us to return that night to Allanstand. Poor Aunt Judy was sitting on her porch in a depth of hopeless misery that made attempts at consolation a mockery. Unlike others whom I have seen in similar circumstances, it was the sin that gave the edge to the sorrow, and especially the thought of the one hurried into eternity without preparation. Both men were under the influence of whiskey; indeed there is not a fight nor a murder on the creek where this could not be said. I told Aunt Judy of the minister's visit to her son in jail the week before. She said, "That man preached us a good sarment that time. He said nothing but what is in the Scripter, and that's what a body wants to hear."

This second visit to the upper Shelton-Laurel with its experiences, stirring, though often painful, strengthened my wish to have a permanent school established. There is an opportunity, and the hearts of the people are turned toward us in hope.

Yours sincerely, FRANCES L. GOODRICH.

Mrs. Frederick H. Pierson, Cor. Secretary.
Mrs. John F. Pingry, Assistant Secretary.
Miss M. Josephine Petrie, Young People's Sec'y.
Mrs. D. E. Finks, Editorial Secretary.

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No. 9. [*No part of this letter is to be copied in any publication.*]

ALLANSTAND SCHOOL,

STACKHOUSE, N. C., November 18, 1899.

DEAR FRIENDS:

The Gahagan day-school was carried on successfully in the tobacco house through the summer and fall until the weather became too uncertain for Miss Harris to take the long walk from her boarding place with safety to her health. She is now taking a vacation of a few weeks at her home so that she may be ready to reopen the school when the new house is finished. She has won the respect and liking of the people, children and parents; their interest in the school grows stronger, and this enforced stop is showing them its value.

Miss Harris' experiences have been varied. One Monday morning a little mite of a girl excused her absence from Sunday-school the day before on the ground of having been "too drunk to come." One of the larger boys "rocked" another and then fled for fear of the teacher's "hickory." After a visit to his house he was won back and behaved himself ever after.

The new schoolhouse is not far from completion and we hope to hold our Christmas service in it. When it is finished, Miss Fish of Hempstead, N. Y., will occupy rooms upstairs over the schoolroom with Miss Harris, and will take charge of the work in general, conducting mothers' meetings, visiting homes, etc., while Miss Harris continues her work in the schoolroom.

Though the day-school is now closed, the Sunday-school continues with its old interest, some of us riding over every Sunday afternoon to conduct it in the tobacco barn.

Until she is needed at Gahagan's, Miss Fish is at Allanstand, finding work enough for hands and brain. Every day some of Miss Merchant's "least" pupils come to the library for an hour or two of kindergarten training with Miss Fish, and the effect is marvelous. Little faces that seemed hopelessly dull have grown bright and intelligent looking and the training in manners strikes deep. The parents often come in to watch, and are won by seeing the happiness of their children.

It seems to all of us as though the school was appreciated more and more; a proof of this can be seen from our windows in the shape of an enormous pile of firewood brought in for the use of the school on the day appointed for the purpose. Almost every family was represented in the gathering.

In my last letter a wish was expressed that a permanent school might be established on Upper Shelton Laurel. This wish has grown through the summer as reports reached me from Mr. Rodgers, who taught there eight weeks, as he had done the summer before. He found the work of the year before almost swept away during the winter, so that everything has to begin over again. Some of the girls and boys whom he had taught were now in evil ways, seemingly beyond his influence. There was a Sunday-school, so called; one of the officers a reported murderer, another a whiskey distiller. All this did not dishearten us; it only showed that it was a waste of effort and money to take hold of that place in anything but a thorough way. If we went there we must go in sufficient force to stay. Since my return five trips have been made there, each one accomplishing something and bringing the school nearer. The people are trying to build a schoolhouse, for the old one is not fit for use in winter. Many promise to help, and if they make good their words the public money need not be touched and the school can thus be lengthened out by two months. But as in most such cases, there is much "wind work" and a few will probably do the real work when it comes to the point.

Through the gift of one of you, a teachers' home can be begun at once, and before the fund is exhausted we hope money will come in to finish the cottage. Mr. Solomon Shelton, who gives the land and much of the lumber for the schoolhouse, will give us an acre or so of land near by for the cottage. He has eleven children (not an uncommon family), and his whole soul is intent on obtaining an education for them. He has said that he would be willing to give up to us his own comfortable dwelling house rather than not have the school.

It is not our purpose to wait until cottage and schoolhouse are finished, knowing how many delays there will be, but to begin school early in December in the old Riley-Shelton schoolhouse where Mr. Fox preached last spring, though it is sadly out of repair and deficient in light. The teachers can occupy a log house offered for the present necessity by Mr. Noah Shelton.

It is Miss Merchant's wish to undertake this new work, with the help of her brother, Mr. Grant Merchant, a graduate of the Asheville Farm School. In spite of the loss to Allanstand involved, it seems the best arrangement that can be made, for it will be easier to find some one to carry on the Allanstand school than one who has the experience, common sense and devotion to succeed in opening Shelton Laurel.

The all-day trips up the Creek to settle all these matters have made me acquainted with many of the Sheltons in their homes. The first time we met with kindness at Uncle Peter's. Going after dinner to another house we assisted at an informal corn shucking for a while and there saw Memory with her arm 'round her sister Viny. One day was chiefly spent in hunting for one of the peripatetic saw mills which had hidden itself far up on the mountain side. It had been dragged over a road rough even for a traveler on horseback. Two days ago I took dinner with Aunt Judy and her daughter Charity. Aunt Judy's sorrow is softened, but she does not forget and her face shows how heavy the burden still is.

As I go from house to house meeting such wholesouled hospitality and courtesy I long to repay it by a richer blessing than the people dream of as they seek an education for their children. Pray that God may send to them, through our hands, the best He has to give.

Yours sincerely,

FRANCES L. GOODRICH.

Mrs. Frederick H. Pierson, Cor. Secretary.
Mrs. John F. Pingry, Assistant Secretary.
Miss M. Josephine Petrie, Young People's Sec'y.
Mrs. D. E. Finks, Editorial Secretary.

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Mrs. Darwin R. James, President.
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Freedmen's Department,
516 Market St., Pittsburgh, Pa.
Mrs. F. D. Palmer, Gen'l Sec'y.
Mrs. V. P. Boggs, Cor. Sec'y.

No. 10. *[No part of this letter is to be copied in any publication.]*

ALLANSTAND SCHOOL,
P. O., STACKHOUSE, N. C., March 16, 1900.

DEAR FRIENDS:

It is a satisfaction to report to you that the Gahagan school and the Shelton Laurel school also are in running order, and though we have swarmed twice, Allanstand is flourishing and seems to grow stronger by "expansion."

In December Miss Ella Allen came to take charge of our day-school, and the little people who had been so loyal to Miss Merchant received the new teacher into their hearts also. Though Shelton Laurel is the youngest school, it had this winter the start of Gahagan, and opened December 12th. Before this the log-house kindly lent by Mr. Noah Shelton had to be repaired and altered a little, and the stick chimney was to be replaced by one of rock. Owing to rough weather, this job was not even begun till the moving day, and until it was finished small fires were the safest, a trying circumstance in cold, wet weather. The large room had been partitioned off and the parlor end was as cosy as possible that first night, the walls covered with red building paper, hangings over window and inner doorway, and the firelight flashing out from the huge fireplace. The furniture had not all arrived, but we sat on kegs which, being full of nails, stayed where we put them, and a packing-box served for a table. The wooden doorlatch pleased me most of all. Attached to it was a string which passed through two holes in the door, so that from outside a turn of the wrist latched or unlatched the door. When we pulled the string inside at night, entrance to our castle was effectually barred. Miss Merchant had driven up from Allanstand that day on top of her load of household goods, and I followed a few hours later on horseback, to spend the first night with her. It was raining when we arrived and by nightfall it poured. It was strange to sit together by the hearth and to realize that our dream of six months past was coming true and that we were at last on Shelton Laurel. A small beginning, truly; but small things used by God confound the mighty.

The next day the school was begun, Mr. Merchant joining his sister, while I went back to Allanstand, after making a few visits and unconsciously proving myself not a Mormon by accepting a cup of coffee for dinner. I had not known until my hostess remarked on this that the Mormon missionaries preach against coffee drinking as much as against liquor.

The school began with ten pupils. In a week there were twenty-two, and now there are sixty on the roll. When eight come from one family and seven from another it counts up fast. Had I known how hard the winter would be I should not have felt it right to permit the Merchants to live in that cabin or to teach in the old schoolhouse, where the doors must be left open for light, as the windows are too few and too small for a school; but the thing was done, and the brave young teachers have made light of hardships and have laughed instead of complaining. "Delayed on account of rough weather" might be said of much this winter, including the building of cottage and new schoolhouse, but the school itself has gone on in spite of the thermometer. Two days ago we had summer weather and thought of planting garden; to-day the snow is deeper than it has been all winter and is still gathering. But this will not last long, and very soon we hope the dwelling house will be completed, the necessary funds having been promised. Miss Merchant hopes to move before warm weather, as she learns that the field where the log house stands is famous for copperheads. The people are learning so fast to trust her. Their words to me—and more than that the way in which they speak of her—proves how good and solid a foundation she is making.

The first service held in the Gahagan schoolhouse was on New Year's Day, when, in spite of difficulties, we had the Christmas tree and Christmas service for that school. There was then no chimney and no window lights and it was not till three weeks later that Miss Fish and Miss Harris could take possession of the three rooms upstairs and reopen school in the large room below. The children gathered fast, so that this, too, is larger than the mother school at Allanstand. Some people had doubted whether the school would ever be started again. The wish was father to the thought, perhaps, for these same people "tell it" that we kidnap the children and send them way off yonder. One little boy who had listened to such talk as this at home declared that if we tried to take him he would get him a stick and fight to the last. He comes to school, but doubtless keeps his eye on Miss Harris all the time.

You will begin to think that I have no thought left for Allanstand, but there is plenty to think and to say about it still. Last Fall one of our school girls went to the Home Industrial School in Asheville and improved so much that when she came home for the Christmas vacation the neighbors hardly knew her. Her cousin, Tom, was so much delighted that he declared he should send his sister, and "she'd got to stay there, too." Lura is really to go, and we hope that Tom can manage to go himself to the Asheville Farm School.

This winter we have had no regular preaching—only one or two visits from a minister. Last week an evangelist held a meeting with good results. Now we need a pastor who will gather into the church those who are being saved and feed them. Such a pastor we hope to have before many months. It is proposed that he shall live at Big Laurel, or

Wallins, as it is sometimes called, the fourth school in the Laurel country and the second to be started. It is more accessible than the other schools, and that and other circumstances make it the fitting place for the manse.

So far I have had no responsibility in regard to Big Laurel, but the need for putting this school on a firm basis is so pressing that I am about to shoulder part of the burden. The school is now taught in a "church-house" belonging to the community. It has met with great favor, and many who felt disturbed at the idea of the school being started are now heartily won over. The teachers are at a great disadvantage in this building with long seats, no desks and with poor heating arrangement. It is impossible to keep the room clean, as the people who use it on Sundays do not respect it as they always do our buildings. The Sunday-school is not in the teacher's hands and not in competent hands, therefore it is not to edification, nor have the teachers the moral grip on the community which the holding of our Sunday-school always gives us. The spiritual influence is less than it would be under favorable conditions. The experience of the other Laurel schools shows more plainly than anything else could do the need of suitable buildings if the right kind of work is to be done at Big Laurel.

A chapel schoolhouse is needed and a manse, which would also be a home for the teachers. A public-spirited man allows the teachers to occupy a house belonging to him, and would doubtless sell it for less than the cost of building a new house. We estimate that $2,500 will be needed to put Big Laurel on the right footing. There is enough money on hand to buy land, and so it will be bought at once.

We are so often asked by friends how they can help us, and whether we can use such and such things, that for the convenience of all I am going to add to this letter a list of what we can and what we cannot use to advantage. You will notice that we no longer ask for articles of clothing. I beg those who have been sending us boxes so generously and kindly not to misunderstand this and come to the hasty conclusion that their efforts have been misplaced and thankless, for this would be far from the truth. Such things have been needed and of great assistance to us, but our desire has been to train the people in habits of self-help, so that in time the need for such help from friends should be done away. This consummation is in sight, and while all that has been sent us, even most recently, will be of use, it is right now that the supply should cease. Work is being furnished the women to an increasing extent, especially in spinning and weaving, and in this way the wants of the children will be met. As you will see by the list below, pieces of goods, large or small, bolts of cotton cloth, gingham, etc., will still be received most thankfully, for the sale of these does not promote the habits of dependence and of not looking ahead which the sale of ready-made garments will do if long continued.

So, knowing that you all wish to help the Mountaineers in the fullest way possible, I send these words without fear of being misunderstood.

And I ask that, as you hear how graciously God has heard your prayers for Laurel, you will continue to help together on our behalf by your supplication "that for the gift bestowed upon us by means of many, thanks may be given by many persons on our behalf."

FRANCES L. GOODRICH.

Articles still needed.

Materials, such as cotton cloth, thread, needles, pins, gingham, jeans, outing and Canton flannel, flannel, buttons, pieces of woolen, cotton and silk goods, large or small.

Papers as follows: "Youth's Companion," "American. Messenger," "Forward," "Christian Herald," Children's Sunday-school papers, limited number of "St. Nicholas."

Books suitable for library, such as biographies, travel, simple histories, children's stories of good moral tone.

Pencils; "Harper's Weekly" and such illustrated papers; magazines for use of teachers and for reference; Sunday-school picture cards; pictures and cards for scrap-books; old calendars; school books for teachers' reference; books not suitable for library but for teachers' use, such as histories, standard novels.

Christmas boxes, when arranged for through Mrs. E. Baker, 156 Fifth Avenue, or myself.

Rag carpet.

Articles not now needed.

Clothing, old and new; such papers as "Sunday-school Times," Lesson papers, missionary magazines, except one or two copies; "Ladies' Home Journal," fashion papers.

Church papers, except that a copy or two sent regularly, even if not new, is enjoyed by the teachers. A friend already supplies us in this way with "The Interior" and "New York Evangelist." "Record of Christian Work," except one copy sent regularly.

Mrs. Frederick M. Pierson, Cor. Secretary.
Mrs. John F. Pingry, Assistant Secretary.
Miss M. Josephine Petrie, Young People's Sec'y.
Mrs. D. E. Finks, Editor of Home Mission Monthly.

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516 Market St., Pittsburgh, Pa.
Mrs. F. D. Palmer, Gen'l Sec'y.
Mrs. V. P. Boggs, Cor. Sec'y.

No. 11. [*No part of this letter is to be copied in any publication.*]

HOLDERNESS, N. H., July 7, 1900.

DEAR FRIENDS :

Not long after the last letter was written you, a minister was sent to hold a communion service at Allanstand and to receive any who might be ready to join the church. We knew of several for whom the new life had begun during the last few months and one who had been waiting for an opportunity to make a public profession of faith. However, we were doubtful whether any besides this man had gained the consent of their minds to cast in their lot with us—for in such matters the mountaineer is not to be hurried. The four teachers, who had come to the field since our mission church of eight members had been formed, were to bring their letters at this time.

On Saturday afternoon one and another dropped in to see the minister and at the close of the preparatory service that evening eleven stayed to be examined for admission. Early on Sunday morning others came, so that when we gathered for the service in the schoolhouse there were eighteen persons ready to be received on profession of faith. So many of these were to be baptized that the line extended from one side of the house to the other. There were men and women of middle age, husbands and wives coming together, young men and boys, an old man, children of eleven years, and young girls. It was a moment that paid for many disheartening days when one little band rose to receive so many into its fellowship.

Some of you will remember T. M., the first man to become a Christian after the starting of the Allanstand school. He has led a consistent Christian life ever since but has been held back from joining the church by scruples about modes of baptism. Making up his mind at last that the spirit gives life and the letter kills, he came forward and with him his wife and two of his children. The two little girls of whom I spoke above, as among the new members, were cousins, each eleven years old, and for some months past had shown strong evidence of love for Christ and of Christian principle. A young man and his wife, who joined the church at this time, live near the school and were at first very indifferent about the advantages it brought, and were rarely at any service. The change that has come to them is shown in many ways, besides their regular attendance at Sunday-school with their little children. The man gave a proof of his new way of looking at things by putting hand-rails on the foot-logs as soon as he was appointed overseer of the road. This is required by law but often neglected, to the great inconvenience and even danger of foot passengers. Of this I can testify, having had some bad moments on logs covered with snow and hung high over the rushing streams. One old man took occasion as soon as he joined the church to speak to a neighbor with whom he had had no intercourse for long on account of an old grudge. His advances were well received and he felt "better satisfied" than he had for many years. Another of the new church members was a boy from the Gahagan school. He had never been to Allanstand and it cost an effort to go there to meet the minister and join the church, but he had set out to do right he said and he was going to do it.

Not long after this communion service came the presbyterial meetings in Asheville. A cordial invitation was given to all in the Laurel communities to come and we arranged that one of our young girls should go to represent the lately formed mission band at Allanstand, the "Cheerful Workers," who are taking their first lessons in missionary knowledge and work. Business called me to Brittains' Cove and from there I drove in to Asheville the day of the first meeting. As I reached the entrance to the school grounds on Main Street the car stopped and to my astonished gaze all Allanstand seemed present, as one after another of my neighbors descended from it. The next Sunday, when we were all at home again, we called on these men to give reports of the meetings and they were ready to do this and to tell what a good time they had had, and especially how happy everybody seemed to be there.

A new feature of the women's presbyterial meetings in Asheville was the exhibition of handiwork, and this we hope to hold once a year. Specimens, old and new, were asked for, and though little time was allowed a number of fine specimens were gathered, of weaving, sewing and basket and hat making. There were examples of linen homespun, of old counterpanes, of old coverlets, and of the coverlet material the weaving of which we are taking so much pains to revive. To illustrate the work further, a weaver was at hand making homespun linsey on a hand-loom. The question of character is so much involved in this matter of handiwork and the thrift it encourages that we feel the key to many of our problems lies in these cottage industries that have been started around our day-schools. Many of you are familiar with the coverlet homespun through the help you have given the industry. A week or two ago I was searching in a large city for the home of a lady interested in the Laurel schools and was puzzled, not being sure of having the right street number, when I saw approaching me a lady with a piece of weaving called "Missouri Trouble" on her arm. It was unmistakable, not only was it homespun but made by one of our weavers. I knew that blue and brown yarn and the unusual way in which the web had been finished. And it was indeed carried by the lady I sought, returning from a meeting where the "Missouri Trouble" had been exhibited. This use for the homespun, to introduce would-be friends, was one we had not reckoned on.

When the Gahagan school re-opened in the winter, the children set out to have a flag, and brought each a few pennies. To this small fund, a class of boys in Columbia, Pa., added an amount large enough to make out the needed sum. For weeks the scholars prepared for a flag-raising by learning drills and recitations, and to add to the occasion, the Allanstand school was invited to come down in a body to hold its closing exercises. So at Allanstand, too, there were marchings and countermarchings and much patriotic fervor to prepare for the great event. When the day came, two wagon loads of children were driven down from Allanstand, while many walked or rode on mules and horses. Though the schools are only four miles apart, many of the Allanstand school girls had never been so far from home before and they shouted with delight at sight of the mill-pond, saying it was the "largest body of water" they had ever seen.

A delegation came from Wallins, another from Shelton-Laurel, so that all the Laurel schools were represented. Parties in wagons or riding came from all the country round. After the children had done their part with recitations of Scripture, songs, flag drills and wearing the colors, came the crowning feature of the day, the address by Capt. Patten, of Asheville, who had come to speak to us on Christian Patriotism. The impulse that he gave toward good citizenship will bear fruit in many young lives.

Now it is vacation time in the mountains, but in a few weeks the schools will re-open. As I write, Miss Merchant is returning to Shelton-Laurel, to take possession of the little cottage which has been building. It is near the new school, a neat frame building put up by the people of the district, so that the coming winter will be free from the risks to health occasioned by poor accommodations and the long distance to be traveled in all weathers.

Mr. Marhoff, the pastor sent at last to the Laurel country, preached for the first time at Allanstand on June 10th, and now, with Mrs Marhoff, he is in the Allanstand cottage. In September they will settle at Big Laurel, called also Wallins. In my last letter I told you of the need for buildings there. Money has been coming to us ; much is still needed. Miss Fish and I attended the closing exercises of the school and were especially pleased to see the interest shown by the parents and friends of the children, who were there in force. Their pleasure and satisfaction in the school showed in their attention and in the delight on their faces as well as in their words of praise. It was on that day that we looked at the many sites proposed for the new schoolhouse, riding from one to another, attended by an interested company of citizens, and dismounting to look over the land and to examine springs. A convenient lot has now been purchased close to the Post-office and store and just where the road from Upper Spill Corn, a region needing missionary effort, comes out on the main road. A rise of ground with a grove of oaks gives a fine site for the chapel schoolhouse we hope to build. There is a good spring on the property and plenty of room for any buildings which may be needed. The little house now occupied by the teachers is near by.

In closing this record of the past four months I want to tell you of the passing away of one known by name at least to many of you, the Widow Gahagan. It was a real sorrow to us all, but her Christian end pointed the way of life to some who had not seemed to heed before the full lesson of her honorable Christian life. The day of her burial was inclement, at times the rain poured in torrents, but the crowd gathered in the little graveyard on the hill was very large. Women and children had tramped miles through mud and ice to show her reverence. It was not the position she held in a family owning miles of the surrounding lands which won for her such love and honor, but her own intrinsic worth and uprightness, the rare charity and kindliness of heart which make the world poorer for her going from us.

Yours sincerely,

FRANCES L. GOODRICH.

Mrs. Frederick H. Pierson, Cor. Secretary.
Mrs. John F. Pingry, Assistant Secretary.
Miss M. Josephine Petrie, Young People's Sec'y.
Mrs. D. E. Finks, Editor Home Mission Monthly.

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Mrs. V. P. Boggs, Cor. Sec'y.

No. 12. *[No part of this letter is to be copied in any publication.]*

Allanstand School,
P. O. Barnard, N. C., Oct. 26, 1900.

Dear Friends :

Since I wrote you in July much has happened that you will like to hear. Instead of starting at the beginning, I am going to tell you first of the meeting two days ago for the organization of the Allanstand Presbyterian church. You remember how, one cold, snowy day, nearly two years ago, the Allanstand Mission of the Hot Springs church was started with eight members, and how at a communion service last April twenty two other names were added to the roll. Now that we have a minister for the Laurel country, the Presbytery granted our petition to be formed into a church, and last Wednesday four ministers met here to carry out the organization: Mr. Marhoff, our pastor; Mr. Jackson of Hot Springs, Mr. Heydenburk of Marshall and Mr. McClenaghan of Asheville.

For several days we were busy making ready to entertain these guests and others who were to come from the various schools for the day. Another part of the preparation that fell to us was seeing those who came desiring to talk with one of us before presenting themselves to the preachers as candidates for church membership. One young woman who shows the change of purpose in her face and demeanor told me that an uneasy conscience led her to make up her mind to come regularly to Sunday-school, and one day when she knew that we were all praying at the schoolhouse, she asked and received forgiveness from God. Since then her household tasks have seemed light, and it is "a heap easier to control the children." She desires to lead them right, and has taught them all to pray. Her step-daughter, a girl of twelve or thirteen years, came to me too. The little prayer-meetings, held for four little girls, led her to think seriously, and after the second one she received the Saviour. Miss Allen tells me she has seemed like a different girl in school this year, diligent and interested instead of being careless and hard to control.

One of the evils which assail the community this fall is the starting of a "government still" on a large scale about two miles up the Allan Creek. One man appears openly in the business and another backs him. The excuse of the first one is that he must do this to get money to educate his children. As one boy is in the Asheville Farm School, paying $12.50 a year, and the others attend our day-school at a monthly cost of from 15 cents to 25 cents, this plea hardly strikes us as sufficient. His wife is a member of our church, and it was reported that she would be forced to sell the liquor, as they needed an extra hand. The day before the meeting, I went up to see her, knowing she was not well enough to leave home. For a mile and a half I walked up the road through the lovely autumn woods, crossing the creek repeatedly on foot logs at various angles to the horizontal, and then, leaving the main road, pushed in between the hills up the bed of a stream, the growth of rhododendron meeting overhead and making a gloom on that cloudy morning. It seemed an ideal path to the home of a distiller. Mrs. C. welcomed me cordially, and we spoke frankly of the hateful business. She told me of the trouble it was to her to think of, and of her determination to keep her own hands clean.

After two rainy days, Wednesday broke fair and lovely as an October day could be, and by half-past ten many had gathered in the schoolhouse to hear the sermon preached by Rev. Mr. Jackson on the text, "Except the Lord build the house," etc.

After the morning service those living near by went home to dinner, taking with them many from a distance, while others formed picturesque groups out of doors to eat the lunches they had brought. Then one by one or by families, the members of the mission and those desiring to join us met the committee, and in this way, some who have lately been inconsistent in their lives were examined and exhorted, and the solemnity of the new step was emphasized to all. This took much time but it was well worth while, and lasting impressions were made. Three new workers brought church letters and five persons came forward to make profession of faith, so that the membership of the new church is thirty-eight.

After the charge and the receiving of members the communion service was held, and then in the westering sunlight the people scattered. It was a picture such as I would give much to present to you with color and movement—the people on foot streaming over the mountain, the wagons more than filled with men, women and children, the teachers mounting at the upping-block one after another, riding up the rise to the large gate and turning off one way and the other with good-byes, quickening their horses' gait, that they might reach their distant homes before dark.

Extra meetings continue through this week and next, and we know that with your prayers joined to ours a blessing will be given us, and that the new church will be not a name only, but a power.

It is time that I told you of what strength we have received in the coming of Rev. Mr. Marhoff to take the field on Laurel. He is a man of rare gifts of mind and spirit, with his own thoughts and opinions, and yet ready to learn from experience and from his new surroundings. His wife is in every respect a help to him and to us. They spent the summer at Allanstand but, on my return, removed to their permanent station at Big Laurel, and are putting up with the serious inconveniences of their present accommodations with the utmost cheerfulness. You will be glad to know that the prospects for the chapel schoolhouse there, to be called the Mark Lance Memorial, are very bright. The appeals made by Miss Stephenson and myself have brought already much generous response, so that we are justified in beginning to build. As the fund grows by future gifts, we can finish and furnish that building, and also make suitable provision for the pastor and teachers. We are satisfied with very plain homes, without modern conveniences which many people regard almost as necessities, but the house at Allanstand and that just built at Shelton Laurel are water-tight, strongly built, warmed enough for health with stoves and fireplaces, with a prophet's chamber and room enough for the extra classes and meetings, and for the entertaining of neighbors with books and papers and talk on rainy days. Homes in fact scarcely above the ability of some of our neighbors to build for themselves if they would, and not too fine for the poorest to copy in some particular at least.

There remain a few items to gather up. At Allanstand we have an addition to our force this year in Miss Emma Daniels of Jacksonville, Ill., who is spending much of her time in good work with the little children and in teaching sewing classes. As soon as we can have the equipment, we shall introduce kitchen garden lessons. Miss Daniels finds work also in Sunday-school, in visiting, in helping with the mothers' meetings and in many things which would otherwise be neglected in my frequent absences to visit the other schools.

At Big Laurel Miss Newman continues principal, while Miss Byerley is her assistant.

In all the schools good work is being done, and better work than ever before. The attention given to nature studies has paid well in awakening dormant powers of observation in all, and now and then a boy is found with a strong natural bent in this direction, who tells us many interesting things he has seen for himself. Through the kindness of members of a book club in New York, we are supplied with a few of the best handbooks, which are passed from one school to another. The classes in geography and history at Allanstand are made especially interesting by Miss Allen. She gathers material and teaches the children to gather it from every source available here, and now and then one of them is able to give personal reminiscences which quicken interest and make the far-off lands seem real. In some of the schools the fact that the earth is round is new and astonishing to the younger children. After the centripetal force had been explained, the question was put why we stayed on as the world turned, and a little boy shouted, "The earth grabs us," and we thought he had caught the idea.

The children at Allanstand (as well as those at the other schools) are zealous for the cleanliness of their schoolhouse. We did not think they themselves quite fitted the room, so the little bare feet and the hands are inspected daily, and the children who do not pass muster are sent to the creek with soap and towel. It is all considered fine fun, and we mean that the idea shall go in to stay. We have a village improvement society (of the most informal sort) of the girls, who pick up papers scattered along the roads, and try to keep the highways tidy as well as the school grounds; and an Allanstand Good Roads Association to repair the long path from cottage to schoolhouse made by the boys. The work of getting gravel in a wheelbarrow seemed to drag, so last Saturday the boys decided to bring a wagon and finish the job at once, and then they wouldn't have "to study" about it any more. This was done, and now we are in beautiful order for the winter.

Those who are acquainted with Cherokee will like to know that after a useful summer with the Misses Henricks at Riceville, she has come to spend the winter at the Gahagan school. As Miss Gorbold is still at home in search of rest she will not need the pony for awhile. Cherokee is not fitted for long journeys or deep waters, but she is of great use in the shorter trips, at this dry season especially, and Miss Fish has already found her a great comfort, and has been able to do much that she could not have managed on foot. I am glad to be able to add that Cherokee's conduct is most exemplary at present.

I will ask you to notice the change in our post office address from Stackhouse to Barnard, N. C. This makes our post office the same as our freight and express station.

Yours sincerely,

FRANCES L. GOODRICH.

MRS. FREDERICK H. PIERSON, COR. SECRETARY.
MRS. JOHN F. PINGRY, ASSISTANT SECRETARY.

WOMAN'S BOARD OF HOME MISSIONS OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,
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No. 18. *(No part of this letter is to be copied in any publication.)*

ALLANSTAND SCHOOL,
P. O. BARNARD, N. C., Feb. 8, 1901.

DEAR FRIENDS :

It may seem at first thought that three Christmas trees and services in three of the Laurel school-houses would be so much alike that a description of one would answer for all. But as we attended them it was the difference that struck us rather than the resemblance.

The first service was at Allanstand, on the afternoon of the 24th. As no preparations could be made the day before, there was much work that Monday morning. Two of the older school-boys came to help us set up the tree, and they enjoyed dressing it, handling the dollies gingerly and delighted with the boys' toy soldiers and ships, and not minding the prickles of the holly tree as we did.

The exercises were of a missionary character; the Mission Band, "Cheerful Workers" gave a concert recitation, "Little Lights." There were several recitations about missionary pennies, and a collection was taken for the Chinese Christians, the members of the Band being prepared with their holly money, earned by gathering holly to ship to the North. The children at the Gahagan school took a similar collection on Christmas Sunday, and together they sent $4.75 to New York, Gahagan giving the larger half.

Just after the address by Mr. Marhoff, and before the tree was touched, Bibles and Testaments were given to a number of the children who had learned the names of the books of the Bible. These gifts are now used in Sunday-school with evident pleasure.

The presents on the tree were for those children only who had attended the Sunday-school during the year, and the better gifts were for the more faithful ones. This is understood now and has a salutary effect. Of course distance of the homes and other circumstances are taken into account, but attendance in December does not make up for neglect the rest of the year.

There was a heartiness about this service which was inspiring. The children sang with spirit, better than at any previous time, and the older people who came to look on were in full sympathy with us. It was good to see those who have come into the church since last Christmas, the heads of families especially, showing in many little ways the change of relation to the school, that it was now theirs to be proud of. Many pretty calendars of 1901 had been sent us and these were distributed among the grown people, giving great pleasure.

That night almost all the teachers and workers in the Laurel country were at the Allanstand cottage, and on Christmas Day all went down the creek together to attend the service at the Gahagan school. It was a bright, mild day, very different from the cold New Year's day of 1900, when we shivered through the exercises in the unfinished school-room, with no chimney and windows unglazed. This time all were warm enough for comfort and there were seats for all, so that the older people could enjoy the songs and exercises ; especially did they appreciate the part taken by the very little people, a concert exercise. The tree was a fine hemlock, and the decorations of red, white and yellow roses against the soft green made it the prettiest daylight tree we have had.

The following Friday was the day appointed for the tree at Shelton-Laurel. It dawned not mild and fair, but with a drizzling rain. Two or three of the Allanstand neighbors started with me, our horses hung about with sacks and bundles till we looked like so many Santa Clauses. It was a surprise to be joined as we went on by one and another of the Allanstand people, all minded to go to "Miss Merchant's tree," in spite of the weather, till there were ten of us on the road, with mules and horses to the number of eight, for some "packed double." The rain held off somewhat till we reached the pretty teachers' home, a great contrast to the log cabin where Miss Merchant welcomed us last year. Close by was the new school-house, where the tree was waiting for the gifts we had brought. At noon the rain came down in earnest, but that did not prevent the children and men and women from making their way in picturesque groups from every direction to the school-house until it was packed, and many were standing outside.

Last year the Allanstand people came to help with the exercises and to lead the singing ; this time they were merely guests. The people of Shelton-Laurel took pains to show that they had adopted Miss Merchant and her school. One of those who had expressed a desire (probably in earnest) a few weeks ago to burn the school-house, would have brought his organ had not the rain prevented. The offer was made spontaneously to show, as he said, "that they could have as good a Christmas tree as any other place and that they meant to do better than what they had been a-doing." But as the organ could not be brought out in the damp, its absence was made up by the singing, led by one of Aunt Judy's sons. Jim Crow sang tenor, and others whose names I do not know sang lustily, while Allanstand, doing its best with its lung power, was scarcely heard at all. The chief singers had books which they brought with them; four or five were gathered around each book while from all parts of the room others would join their voices whenever tune and words were familiar. One song, "We are sailing over the ocean," was given by these inland folks with a swing and spirit which sailors might envy.

How can I tell you what this singing is like or explain its wild charm! The voices are often harsh and overstrained, but no one is out of tune, and the rhythm is perfect. It makes ordinary singing seem tame and commonplace, having in it a flavor of wild and natural forces. It seems an interpretation of the people, of their life and thoughts and yearnings, pent up at other times, only allowed this one expression, and for the meaning it has, it is good to hear.

Last year, as you know, was held our first Christmas service here and the presents were of small value. The real "store dolls" and picture books given this time were a great advance. I happened to see one little boy far back in the room as he received his gifts. These were a necktie, a pin-ball and a bag of candy. He took them in amazement and was immediately lost to all that went on around him. First he looked at the pin-ball, turning it over and over, noting the text-card pasted on one side. Then he drew the necktie through his fingers. Meanwhile the pin-ball fell down and he dived for it under the feet of the men next him. Having recovered it, he wiped it off carefully on the knee of his pants and then turned it over a few times more. Then the candy bag claimed his attention, and there I left him, being called to another part of the room. As the closing hymn was sung, I was sitting on the edge of the platform and just in front was a row of very happy little boys. One had a great book with movable pictures, sent by two children in Cleveland, O. His joy needed sympathy, so he put his finger on the figures that most delighted him, looking up to me for responsive grins. It was one of the most delightful pantomimes I ever joined in.

I would not wish to take my oath that no one had taken a dram before coming there, but no one had more whiskey than he could carry and there was perfect order. This was no more than we expected, though we had heard of a neighborhood Christmas tree prevented by a fight a few days before and not many miles away. But it was evidently a matter of congratulation to Miss Merchant's neighbors and supporters that no one had misbehaved himself. A dialogue held a little way down the creek that same afternoon came to my ears later. "How'd the tree go off up there?" "Oh, fine." "Anybody drunk?" "Don't you know people have better sense than to go *there* drunk!"

For a few weeks past I have been staying with Miss Fish, at the Gahagan school, in the absence of Miss Harris, on vacation. One purpose in being there for a time was to visit the people on the other side of Big Laurel creek, who are much easier of access from Gahagan's. The Big Laurel runs in a deep gorge below the school-house and the region on the further side, from the creek to the top of the Walnut Mountain range, is known as Sodom. From lower Sodom, the district just opposite us, a number of children attend day-school and Sunday-school at Gahagan's, making their way by short cuts over ridges and through valleys to the splash dam, by which they can cross to the school.

It is true throughout the mountains that there are many houses off the high road, approached only by rough wagon tracks or trails, but in Sodom the houses on the main road are the exception and dwellings are tucked away in every nook and corner. Our researches have been full of interest as to the strange and devious ways we have followed and the acquaintances made. Most of these trips must be left undescribed till another time, but I must tell of one made, not to Sodom, properly speaking, but to a few homes further down the creek.

The day was unusually cold, snow falling in scattered flakes and a cutting wind blowing which made us hesitate before setting out, and would have turned us back later had not pride forbid either of us to give up. There is a family living on the farther bank of the creek within half a mile of the school-house which neither Miss Fish nor I had ever visited. The oldest boy and oldest girl, both grown, come occasionally to Sunday-school and we had still a gift from the Christmas tree for Joe, who had not been present at the service. This we put in our saddle pockets and added other things which had come too late for the tree. Our way led for three miles over the road to the railroad—till the usual ford below was passed. Then we turned off to the left, according to directions given us, on to a steep hillside up which the horses scrambled like cats; then winding in and out along the hill we followed the trail till it crumbled away to a few inches and it seemed safest to dismount and lead. Now we were traveling up the creek again, parallel with the road opposite. At last, after nearly a mile, the path came up against a fence. Here we tied our shivering horses in a wood which sheltered them a little from the wind and went on through a field, down, down—till the creek came in sight and on its bank a tiny cabin daubed with red mud. Opposite us rose the hill on which the school stands, a height rocky and shaggy with timber. In the house we met a cordial welcome from parents and seven children and were made to take two of the four chairs—the father occupied another and the oldest girl the fourth, with the baby sister in her lap. The rest stood, or sat on the floor near the fire-place. The mother was a sweet-faced woman who said she never went anywhere. She would like to come to the "mother meeting" but there was no way for her to cross the creek. When the splash dam above was shut the older ones could "sorter cross" on poles or stilts, but the gates might be opened at any time and retreat be cut off. So school seemed out of the question for these boys and girls growing up so near and yet not near our school. After leaving the Bible for Joe, who was not at home, we asked one of the other boys to come up with us to the place where the horses were left, and there he was agreeably surprised by gifts for each of the children from the saddle-pockets. We have hope that it may work, as in similar cases, and that this token of friendship may start a desire to attend school which will triumph over obstacles.

We were told that the path we struck on the hill would lead us to another out-of-the-way cabin and so, after a council of war on the weather, we determined to halt in the shelter of an old tobacco barn for refreshments and then persevere. It was indeed a cold lunch that we partook of, but it served the purpose of reviving our courage and we were soon riding along a very tolerable track quite comfortable enough in body to enjoy the panorama unrolled before us, wherein we could see one well-known road to Barnard from a new point of view and discover many interesting facts about the windings of the creek.

The cabin we were in search of was reached at last. One of the school-girls was lately married to a young man who announced to his world that he was marrying in order to have some one to take care of his mother, as she is helpless with rheumatism. He seems to have suited himself as well, and it was a very happy family we found in the dark cabin, strange place as it seemed for a bride's first bower. It is well to go visiting on rough days occasionally, for then one sees the disagreeable side of mountain life, when the household is all gathered inside and the doors shut. When, as in this case, there is no window at all, it seems too dreadful to think of and one longs to rouse discontent with such conditions as the first step to a change.

Our visit was taken kindly as it was meant. Cherokee disgraced herself by breaking her bridle and this was repaired by our host with great good nature.

Beyond this cabin the road was blocked by the lumbermen's fallen trees, and we turned back for a half mile and then led the horses down an impossible hill to some shacks built for the logging men. Here were lonely women who had come from Tennessee with their husbands for the lumber business and who were glad to see a neighbor's face; and children who laughed with pleasure at the contents of the saddle-bags. Then we went home by the main road, stopping only once more to call on a family lately moved in near the ford. Notwithstanding that a whole day had been consumed in making these few visits, we felt well paid and didn't "begrutch our trip one mite."

Since I last wrote, the fund for Big Laurel has been growing, so that manse as well as chapel school-house can be erected this year, and that means much to the workers and the work. The logs are being brought in for sawing, and when the weather opens we hope to have everything ready to begin the building.

The mission band at Allanstand was spoken of above. This was first formed of little girls, but this year the proposal to admit boys was carried by acclamation, and the boys are a great addition, both for the work done and in the programmes. Orders are taken for anything that the "Cheerful Workers" can make, shuck mats, charming little shuck hats and gingham sunbonnets for dolls, boxes and table-mats and napkin rings of braided raphia, sewing bags and pin-balls. This work fills part of every meeting—then comes the programme, prepared by Miss Daniels, as leader, in which two or three members take part each time, telling what they have read in the magazine or book, given them beforehand, on the subject for the day.

A band of girls has just been formed at the Gahagan school and they have chosen to be known as "Helping Hands."

The Woman's Home and Foreign Missionary Society of Allanstand, which was started three years ago with two members, Miss Merchant and myself, has grown to a membership of twenty-five or thirty, each one pledging at least ten cents a year. Part of this membership is in the Gahagan community, so that some of the meetings are held there. The meetings are well attended; quilts and rugs are started for schools or missionary homes. It is too soon yet to speak of work done. A topic is taken up each time and the religious life of the women is quickened as they learn the need of other women and so feel the worth of their own knowledge of Christ.

Yours sincerely,

FRANCES L. GOODRICH.

Mrs. Frederick H. Pierson,
Cor. Secretary.
Mrs. John F. Pingry,
Asst. Secretary.

WOMAN'S BOARD OF HOME MISSIONS OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,
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No. 14. *(No part of this letter is to be copied in any publication.)*

Allanstand School, N. C.,
Sept. 4, 1901.

Dear Friends:

On my return from vacation the first of August, the first business was the starting of the schools at Allanstand, Shelton-Laurel and Big Laurel, the last named school being opened in the just finished chapel school house so many of you have an interest in, the Mark Lance Memorial. Miss Harris leaves the Gahagan school to take charge of this at Big Laurel with Miss Byerley as assistant, and together they occupy the teacher's home which was bought last winter. Their school has prospered greatly in the new building during the three weeks since it was opened.

Close by is the new manse in which Mr. and Mrs. Marhoff have been living; but want of health obliges Mr. Marhoff to resign his position, and his place in the Laurel country is now filled by Rev. F. H. Heydenburk. The coming of Mr. Heydenburk prevents the feeling of strangeness, which would so put back the work were the change to be made to one unknown by the people, for it was he who began the efforts of one church at Big Laurel three years ago, and he has been often at Allanstand and Gahagan. The people know and like him, and he has a hold on them which it would take a stranger a year or two to acquire.

The Gahagan school did not re-open until two days ago; for the finishing of the house, by ceiling school-room and living rooms, was delayed. Now, however, Mr. Gahagan, by pushing the work and doing much of it himself, has made the house comfortable and beautiful, and Miss Fish has returned to her home there with Miss Lulu Allen as teachers of the day-school in place of Miss Harris, who was needed at Big Laurel, as I have said.

Miss Ella Allen remains as day-school teacher at Allanstand, and Miss Sue Reese this year teaches the Shelton-Laurel school under the direction of Miss Merchant.

On the left bank of Big Laurel Creek stretches a narrow strip of country three miles long, hemmed in between the creek and the Walnut mountains; a strip with scarcely a square rod of level ground, but broken by the shoulders of the mountains into innumerable wrinkles and tiny coves. For more than a generation this district has been commonly known as Sodom, a mountain spur which extends to the creek dividing it into Upper and Lower Sodom. The edge of the lower settlement is opposite the Gahagan school, and is in a measure within reach of it, so that a few children attend the day-school and some are frequent visitors at Sunday-school. But the people of Upper Sodom are shut off by physical barriers from the outside world.

Last spring an appeal for aid reached us from this place and we inquired the way to go there. Only one "big road" leads in from one side, a hilly but tolerably good road measuring ten miles or more from the Gahagan school, while as the crow flies the distance cannot be over three miles. But there are short cuts which shorten the journey by half, but which involve fording the creek many times or leading the horses up and down paths too steep to ride over. By one of these trails Miss Fish and I first visited Upper Sodom, and in that one day's trip we received a more urgent appeal for a school than has come to us from any other place. "We've been looking about, and you all are doing more than any one else to help the country," or "seems like all the other places is a getting schools and we're left out." They told us of the unsatisfactory public school, provided with a teacher so inefficient that not even the legal number of pupils—one fifth of the children numbered in the district—would attend. "We're tired of having two months' school a year, with a teacher that reads the newspaper all day, and when a little feller asks him what a letter is he ain't got time to tell him."

The master of the house, where we were hospitably entertained, was absent when we arrived, but as we sat down to the dinner table his nephew, acting as host, said suddenly, "Wait on the table, you-uns, ef you-uns follers it," which, being interpreted, is, "Ask a blessing if that is your custom." "Now you see what's before you, just reach fer it," was the next remark politeness required of him, and we did reach for the good cheer provided.

After we were through dinner the master came in, the one who had sent us the message beforehand. He could take scant time to eat, for, as he said to his wife, "They're talking school in yonder." Much talk of school we had, and a friendship was begun which has already grown firm and strong.

In answer to every request for a school we could only say, "We will see," but before we made our second visit the money for a teacher's home was promised and soon after the salaries needed were also provided. The land was given us by the people, a piece of hillside half covered with a growth of white pine, and with a fine spring and a beautiful outlook on the mountains.

During the summer the materials for the teacher's home were prepared, the logs for the lower story hewn and squared by hand, the lumber sawed for the half-story above. The chestnut shingles, made by hand, are now being hauled to the place; the cellar is dug and the sills laid. The use of logs is an experiment which the giver of the house is as anxious as I to have tried, and we think the cottage will be both picturesque and comfortable, while the expense will not be increased. One of the neighbors said: "Oh, it's going to be a complete thing! Miss G. she drawed the plans. There's going to be two little log pens like in front and another log pen joined to them behind twenty feet square."

Miss Carrie Clark, of Dayton, Ohio, has been appointed as the missionary house-mother for this new settlement, and as day-school teacher Miss Vonna McLean, the valedictorian of the last class graduated from the Home Industrial School in Asheville.

When the most urgent business of the other schools was attended to, I was free one Saturday morning to turn Fleet's head toward Upper Sodom, or Ramsey's Branch, as it is sometimes called. Rumors had reached me that the community was stirred to the depths over school matters, most of the people being determined to have our help at once by combining the free school with ours, to be taught in the old log school-house, and three or four contrary minds being equally set in keeping us out of the school-house—some for theological reasons, fearing we would teach the children wrong doctrines which would "cause them to be lost," and one because he wished to secure the public-school money for his son, one of the unsatisfactory teachers of whom we had heard. There had been much wire-pulling and excitement ran high. A school meeting was to be held that day, for the School Committee had offered to leave the decision to a vote of citizens.

When I reached the school-house a religious meeting was in progress. One of the men grouped under the dense shade of the hemlocks outside stepped forward to take charge of my horse, a courtesy which showed a very friendly feeling where every woman is accustomed to hitching and unsaddling her own nag. Inside the house I found a number of men, women and children and five preachers, one of whom was reading a passage of Scripture. Though there was no staring, I was conscious that every one was taking stock of the "Presbyterian woman." After a prayer and the singing of a doleful hymn with the refrain, "I have no mother now," Brother J. K. was announced as the preacher for the morning. He began thus: "Brethren, sisters and friends—I wish the lot had fallen on any other of these brethren to preach instead of me. I'm not prepared. I never felt so little like preaching in my life. Me and Brother R. here, we've been wandering about together all morning, and my mind seems like it's distracted and I hain't nothing to say to you. If I say anything to help you it'll not be me, it'll be the Lord." He then proceeded to give an earnest discourse on the text, "Be thou faithful unto death and I will give thee a crown of life." As he grew more and more excited groans of approval and amens burst forth from his fellow ministers and the old women on the front benches. His voice rose in the "holy tone," which has much the effect in sustained sound of intoning. He told us about John who wrote the Revelation; how all the twelve except him met with an early death by martyrdom. "Now this is history; this isn't Bible-ah. When I tell you history-ah, I tell you it's history, and when I tell you Bible-ah, I tell you it's Bible-ah. Now history tells us that John was boiled in a cauldron of oil-ah. And as he was rolling to and fro in the cauldron, and they were trying to disperse him and make an end of him-ah—now I've had many a one to ask me-ah, whereabouts it says John was boiled in a cauldron of oil-ah, and I tell them, 'That's not Bible, it's history-ah—and as he was rolling from side to side in the cauldron-ah, he composed these beautiful lines, 'How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord.' Firmness, brethren, that's what I love, firmness."

The school meeting was held after I left for Allanstand, but word was sent us the next day that the vote showed a very large majority in favor of our having the school. As this is the best time of year for attendance, it would not do to wait until the teacher's home is built before opening school. A search for some vacant house which would answer for a temporary home for the workers was fruitless, but one of our best friends offered a nice clean room in his house, where Miss McLean could keep house for the six weeks or so while the cottage was building.

Last Monday the school started, and I had the deep pleasure of seeing another group of children gathered around a competent and Christian teacher. The school-house is dark and the long benches are most inconvenient, but with the good hope of a school-house of our own some time the start can be made and pioneer work done this year. One little boy confided to me after school was over for the day that he "liked the new teacher splendid." Miss Clark and I spent a busy day fitting up the room in Mr. R.'s house, having stove set up, unpacking and placing the few pieces of furniture and the pots and pans and dishes necessary for housekeeping for one, contriving a closet and dressing-room with curtains, so that when Miss McLean dismissed school she found a cosy little place ready for her. Though she will have little time for thought, these next few weeks will be lonely and hard, and it is only a brave and devoted heart which could face them as she does, with high courage and cheerfulness.

Yours sincerely,

FRANCES L. GOODRICH.